

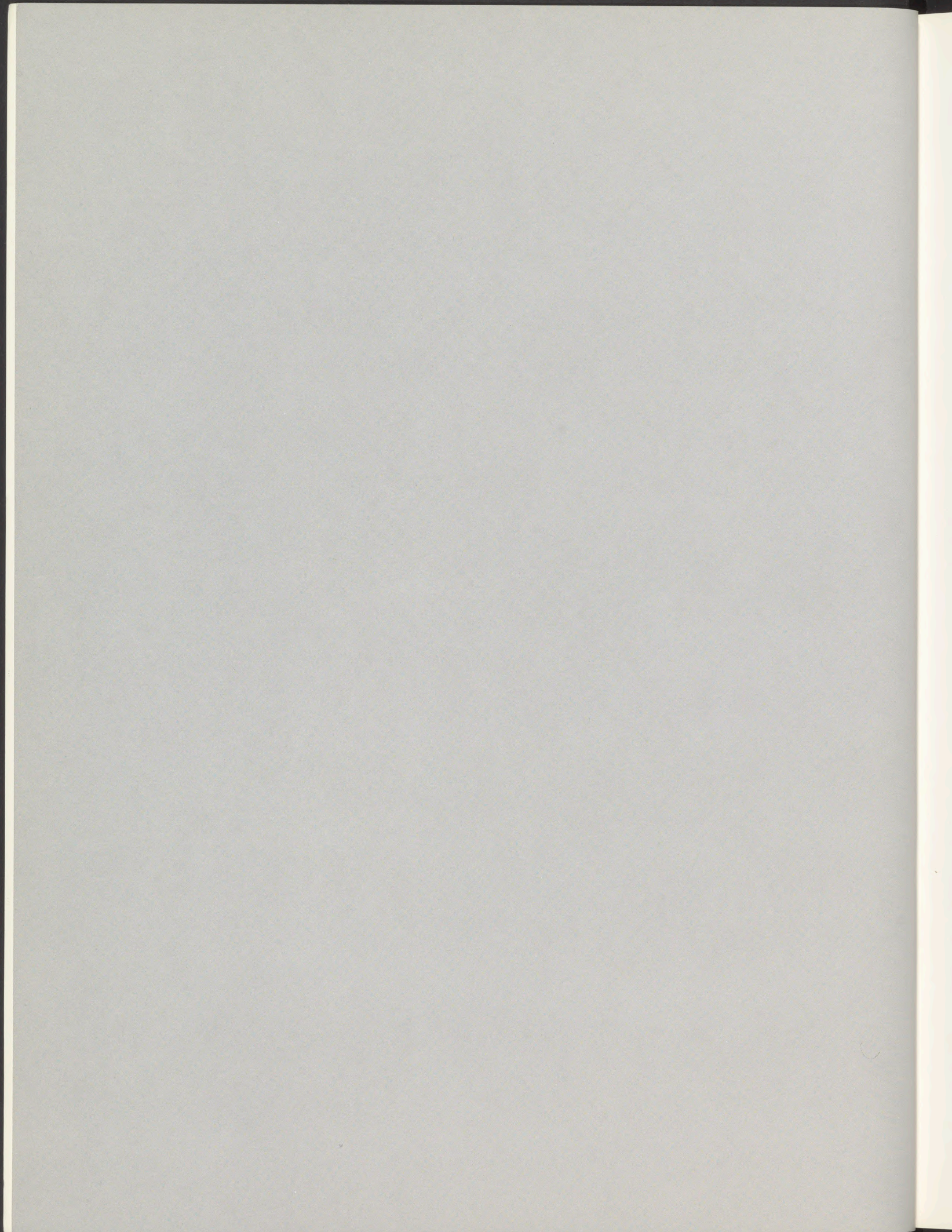
Guy Pène du Bois

ARTIST ABOUT TOWN









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CORCORAN GALLERY OF ART
WASHINGTON DC

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Washington, D.C.

October 10 to November 30, 1980

JOSLYN ART MUSEUM

Omaha, Nebraska

January 10 to March 1, 1981

MARY AND LEIGH BLOCK GALLERY

Northwestern University

Evanston, Illinois

March 20 to May 10, 1981

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Foreword

It is particularly fitting that the Corcoran Gallery should organize this retrospective of the work of Guy Pène du Bois (1884-1958). As an artist he was a frequent exhibitor in Corcoran biennials and an occasional juror; as a critic, he wrote persuasively about contemporary American art, a primary interest of the Corcoran since its establishment in 1869.

Fifty years ago, Guy Pène du Bois, if not exactly a household name in America, enjoyed an enviable reputation. Today, he is known to scholars of American art and to a handful of collectors, who appreciate the urbanity of his stylized realism. His works provide exactly the record of a period he strove to achieve. His assumption that they would live because of their quasi-documentary quality has, however, not been borne out by time. Like so many artists who were not part of the modernist movement, Pène du Bois was forgotten with the triumph of abstraction. The resurgence of interest in realism in general and figurative art in particular has, during the last decade, led to a reevaluation of art from the pre-World War II period. The purpose of this exhibition is to take a second look at an artist who played a key role in the development of American art in the first half of this century.

Pène du Bois' art was not revolutionary. It did not break abruptly with the past. Rather it built on the urban realism and art-for-life's-sake philosophy promoted by his teacher, Robert Henri, early in this century. But it was a personal vision that finally shaped Pène du Bois' brand of realism, a vision tempered by his French upbringing, by his writing of art criticism, by his living abroad, and by—although he probably would have denied it—the modernist art he disliked. I am speaking here, primarily of his work from the 1920s and 1930s, the period of his most sustained artistic output during which he achieved his mature style.

In many ways, Guy Pène du Bois' art is easy to approach and easy to understand. It is, first of all, about life—life as he knew it as a student, journalist, artist and teacher; life as he knew it in New York and Paris. It is also about people—people doing things and going places; people generally of the leisured class, who travelled abroad, went to the races, belonged

to clubs, lounged in side-walk cafes. It is the kind of art we can all relate to on a personal level. But Pène du Bois' works, although they reflect in their subject matter the life he knew, did not simply reproduce what he saw; they were primarily creations of his imagination, ruled less by anecdotal incident than by design. Not infrequently, a note of ambiguity invades a composition, as if the artist intentionally set out to disorient the viewer in order to assert the formal, non-subjective qualities of the piece.

Ultimately, the art of Guy Pène du Bois is about style—that elusive quality pursued with tenacious wit by the bright and talented of the 1920s and 1930s on both sides of the Atlantic; that quality one finds in the lyrics of Cole Porter, the comedies of Noel Coward, the movies of Lubitsch, the pages of *Vanity Fair*. It is a quality associated with glamour and the international set, with dinner at the Brevoort and cocktails at the Plaza, with vacations on the Riviera and Pernod at the Café du Dôme. Glamour pervades many of the major works of Pène du Bois—they were, after all, about the people, including himself, for whom this life style was a reality. But glamour is often a veneer in his art, just as it was in the way of life he depicted. And unlike advertisements in pulp magazines that played on the dreams of would-be sophisticates, Pène du Bois' art, while evocative, does not engender envy for that good life. In fact, his hard forms and electric colors have the opposite effect: they convey a sense of the toughness, the glitter, the emptiness of the fashionable world. Modeled by an indeterminate light, the solid figures with their mask-like faces frequently appear physically or psychologically isolated from each other.

With the incisiveness of a detached observer, Guy Pène du Bois took life in and extracted its essentials for his art. He presented the viewer with figural types rather than individuals, with general situations rather than specific events. Tinged with satire, his work presents a bemused view of human kind. Yet despite his visual wit, it would be misleading to imply that, in his paintings, Pène du Bois assumed a superior moral position vis-à-vis his subjects. Far from it! But as an artist, he had to distance himself from the life he por-

trayed, Henri's philosophy notwithstanding.

Pène du Bois probably chose his subjects partially because they immediately aroused in the viewer associations with glamour and style, and he manipulated these associations to achieve the visual responses he desired. However, in the final analysis, his art is as much concerned with form as with content. It is precisely his ability to distill the essence of a scene, to reduce it to basic forms and colors, to abstract it, if you will, that accounts for the modernity and pizzazz of his most memorable works. The subject matter simply reinforces, through association, what is already evident in the formal elements themselves. The colors and shapes as much as the subject document the period: they suffuse his works with the *joie de vivre*, the *je ne sais quoi*, the style of those halcyon days between the two world wars.

This project has a special meaning for me. I was first introduced to the work of Guy Pène du Bois in the late 1950s when I was fresh out of college. The few paintings I saw then complemented the verbal images of the 1920s I had recently gleaned from the novels of Fitzgerald and Hemingway. My youthful attraction to the glamour of that period made me want to learn more about Pène du Bois. The intervening years have not given me many opportunities to satisfy this desire. Therefore, I am personally grateful to Betsy Fahlman, the author of the catalogue and guest curator, for sharing her extensive knowledge of Guy Pène du Bois with us and to the many lenders, public and private, for depriving themselves of the pleasure of his works' company for the duration of this exhibition.

EDWARD J. NYGREN, Curator of Collections,
Corcoran Gallery of Art

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List of Lenders

Arthur G. Altschul
Estate of William Benton, Courtesy of The William Benton Museum of Art, University of Connecticut, Storrs, CT
Mr. and Mrs. Irwin L. Bernstein
The Butler Institute of American Art, Youngstown, Ohio
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The central figure in any research on Guy Pène du Bois is the artist's daughter, Yvonne Pène du Bois McKenney. Without the aid of her bountiful memory and patience in answering innumerable questions, my research would not have progressed very far. I owe a special debt to Lois Fink of the National Collection of Fine Arts. My summer there as a Visiting Scholar enabled me to complete the bulk of my research. Garnett McCoy of the Archives of American Art has also been a most fruitful source. Antoinette Kraushaar has helped in many ways and I am deeply appreciative of her assistance. Sandra Leff and Elizabeth Dailey of the Graham Gallery have also helped enormously. Several colleagues, scholars, and friends have shared with me the fruits of their research, and provided crucial moral support; they deserve special mention—Avis Berman, Peg and Bob Harrison, Gail Levin, Bennard Perlman, Betty Romanella, Pamela Scott, Helen Farr Sloan, Bob Wiebe, and Judy Zilczer.

I began my research on Guy Pène du Bois while still an undergraduate at Mount Holyoke College when I participated in a seminar conducted by Grant Holcomb. As my education continued, my interest in this artist grew and he is now the subject of my dissertation, being completed at the University of Delaware under the direction of William I. Homer. A Rockefeller Foundation Fellowship from the University of Delaware has facilitated its completion.

Space does not permit the individual acknowledge-

ment of the many people who answered my queries. However, I would like particularly to thank Ripley Albright, John Baker, Jonathan and Jeffrey Bergen, Ralph Bernstein, Isabel Bishop, Lois Blomstrann, Richard Born, Timmy Bourne, Alice Butler, Jay Cantor, Ann Clift, Whitney Darrow, Jr., Virginia Dehn, John Ellis, Richard Frazier, Ira Glackens, Edith and Lloyd Goodrich, James Berry-Hill, Joan Karges Hogg, Susan Hobbs, Flora Irving, Willa Kim, Winifred Lansing, Lawrence Larkin, John Palmer Leeper, Irene Little, Betty Madden, James L. Montague, Grace Morrison, Kitty Nicholson, Marc Pachter, George Albert Perret, Lee Scharf, Michael St. Clair, Rick Stewart, Betsy Stott, Jane Bouché Strong, Julia Sullivan, Lisa Mabon Trent, Jack Tworkov, Theodora Waldron, Barbara Wolanin, and David N. Yerkes.

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Finally, I wish to thank the National Endowment of the Arts for its support of the exhibition and catalogue.

BETSY FAHLMAN



Guy Pène du Bois, c.1935. Courtesy The Pène du Bois Collection.

Guy Pène du Bois: a reevaluation

by BETSY FAHLMAN

My realism is a matter of feeling, of heart—it is not a matter of head. I put down on canvas, or I believe that I do and I believe it firmly, the feeling or the meaning that the sight of the figure conveys to me. For that reason my pictures should live. They are a record of a man of a period. That makes them a record of a period and as such valuable.

GUY PENE DU BOIS, Diary, 1 June 1915

INTRODUCTION

This catalogue and exhibition represent the first major study of the art and career of Guy Pène du Bois (1884-1958). His energies embraced the role of painter, critic, and teacher, and thus brought him into direct contact with the major figures and issues of his day. His career began at a time when Robert Henri's Realism was fighting its first battles and encompassed a period that saw the initial enthusiastic reception of modernism and the triumph of Abstract Expressionism.

Guy Pène du Bois' active career makes him an important figure of his time. For a short period he was sympathetic to the aims of modernism at a point when few other critics were inclined to be so, although he was never an avant garde artist himself. More important, and for a much longer time, he was an articulate advocate for a realistic mode of painting that had begun with Robert Henri. His perceptive comments on the American art world of his time treat major concerns of artists like himself—dealers, collectors, museums, and exhibitions. Written from the point of view of a practicing artist, his criticism serves as a revealing barometer of the art world in which he lived. Further, with his own distinctive painting style he wittily depicted manikin-like flapper figures and their overfed and pompous male companions. They serve as a symbol of the chic and sophisticated 1920s and 1930s.

Pène du Bois is not easy to assign to a specific art historical pigeonhole. While not the instigator of new subject matter, as were the Eight, he was a major inheritor in his painting and in his criticism of their aesthetic stance. Nor was he an avant garde artist, although his broad handling of form and luminous colors would not have been possible without the expe-

rience of modernism. And he did not favor the aloof and idealistic concerns with beauty of the Academicians. The obviously patriotic symbols created by the Regionalists did not interest him either, although he was firmly committed to an American art. Falling into none of these broad groups, Pène du Bois remained decidedly progressive.

He has been dismissed as a purely illustrative painter or caricaturist who merits no investigation beyond superficial characteristics. John I. H. Baur could view him only as a "romantic realist."¹ E. P. Richardson dismissed him as "another painter illustrator"² who "fell into a painting formula that quickly grew wearisome."³ Sheldon Cheney regarded him as only a "clever artist-writer-thinker,"⁴ whereas Henry Geldzahler thought him merely "an interesting minor artist."⁵ Even those scholars who have devoted themselves to the task of rescuing American artists from undeserved obscurity have found little of interest in Guy Pène du Bois' work—Milton Brown could see in his painting only an "uninspired mediocrity."⁶

These harsh judgments cannot be supported, and it is time to reconsider artists like Guy Pène du Bois. The considerable attention paid to the avant garde has obscured other contributions and has served to present a narrow view of a vital and active period. Too little attention has been paid to artists like Pène du Bois and his contemporaries Leon Kroll, Eugene Speicher, Alexander Brook, Robert Winthrop Chandler, Louis Bouché, and others. It is hoped that this study will stimulate further interest in this lively period of American art history.

EARLY YEARS

Born in Brooklyn, New York, in 1884, Guy Pène du Bois was raised in a Creole household.¹ His family had emigrated to America from Honfleur in Brittany in 1738, settling in Louisiana on a plantation in Gonzales, Ascension Parish, near New Orleans. His great grandfather was an architect and a builder, and his great grand uncle had helped build the Cathedral of New Orleans.² After the Civil War the family moved to New York City.



Fig. 1. Henri Pène du Bois, c.1900. Courtesy The Pène du Bois Collection.

Henri Pène du Bois³ (fig. 1), the artist's father, maintained ties with his native New Orleans by serving as the New York correspondent during the 1890s for the *Daily Picayune*. He had completed his education in Paris, as did many boys from families he grew up with, sponsored by his uncle, Henri de Pène, a journalist. In gratitude for this, he joined his own family name, "du Bois," with that of his uncle, to form "Pène du Bois," which today remains the family name.

Henri Pène du Bois had begun his career in the insurance business, but when a story he had written won a prize in a contest sponsored by the *New York World*, he decided to devote himself to being an art critic and a man of letters.⁴ Throughout this period he collected rare books which had fascinated him since his years in Paris. He decided at one point to settle permanently in France and put his considerable collec-

tion up for auction in 1887.⁵ The move, however, never materialized. He began to write for the *New York American* during the mid-1890s.

As a member of the Grolier Club in New York City, Henri Pène du Bois had contact with prominent French and American literary figures. He was also the American correspondent for the Parisian magazine, *Le Livre*, edited by his friend, Octave Uzanne. This gave him further contact with the foremost French writers of the day, many of whom were his personal friends. He translated works by Balzac, France, Merimée, and others, as well as compiled collections of sayings gleaned from his wide familiarity with French literature.

Guy Pène du Bois' father was rarely home. When he was, he kept himself apart from family matters. His wife felt that "so great a man"⁶ should not be bothered with domestic details, and his children knew him mainly as an aloof and preoccupied figure. Because his father spoke with "wonted extravagance,"⁷ young Guy had trouble accepting what he said literally, remembering him as being "extravagantly and incurably romantic."⁸ Before Guy began school each day, his father would read to him a piece from the morning paper which he had written the previous day. Whether or not his son understood what was being read was of little concern to him. In his son's view, Henri Pène du Bois was totally impractical. "No man," he recollected, "ever wore rosier frames or more foolishly managed to keep them on when ordinary common sense was crying for their removal."⁹

Guy's mother, Laura Hague Pène du Bois, had English roots, prompting this French family to call her "l'Anglaise." But her father had married a French woman, so she could legitimately claim a French heritage as well. A practical woman who provided a sensible balance to her husband's impracticality, she was the solid anchor for a family that had never quite recovered from losing the grand life of New Orleans. She did not want her two sons to grow up to be the "butterfly"¹⁰ their father was. It was all right for him, but not for them. She struggled constantly with money problems since the family was always living beyond its means. Her sacrifices and

her good humor carried the household through the many moves they were forced to make.

Named for his father's friend, Guy de Maupassant, who remembered the child's birthdays with inscribed books, Guy at first spoke only French; he did not speak English until he was almost nine years old. He grew up in a literary and sophisticated environment. Surrounded by a lively cluster of grandparents, aunts, uncles, and cousins, he spent his youth amongst a decidedly French household. On Sundays, French-speaking family friends from New Orleans would come over to the apartment and exchange stories. This established that strong French axis that lasted his entire life.

When Guy was fourteen the family moved into a house on Staten Island—"the real country."¹¹ The fact that it was connected only by a ferry boat to the mainland increased its isolation from the rest of the city. Steel engravings after paintings by David and Geri-cault hung on the walls.

By the time Guy was in high school at Port Richmond, on Staten Island, he had discovered that he did not need to spend much time on his studies in order to do well. He began to devise other projects, like book binding, to occupy his time. During this period he began to draw a good deal, as well as to write.¹² With the encouragement of family friends, Pène du Bois' talent was soon recognized. One morning his father announced to the family that he was going to enroll his son, then fifteen, in art school to "make a real painter out of him."¹³ Typically, his father had discussed none of these plans with his son before revealing them. It was a decision that would be the turning point in Guy Pène du Bois' life.

ART SCHOOL

Art school is unlike other schools. It is as unrestricted in age as it is in deportment and opinion. Its outstanding population is composed of independents, revolutionists, free thinkers, who have been brought together by the urge to express themselves. It does not matter here whether this urge is conscious or not. It does not matter that it may be and very often is engulfed by the suggestions of a more ordered or collected personality. The art student is on his own. He is not required to punch a real or even a metaphorical time



Fig. 2. Guy Pène du Bois, c.1915. Courtesy The Pène du Bois Collection.

clock. In an art class he finds himself in a mixed group of personalities of varying ages and stages of development. He must make his way among them as he would in the world. And while the world is a little more diversified, or should be, the differences in the characters encountered is never so marked as in this society where each individual is bent upon and takes pride in the expression of his own ego.¹

In 1899 Guy Pène du Bois (fig. 2) was enrolled in the New York School of Art, then still known as the Chase School after William Merritt Chase (1849-1916), who had founded it in 1896. Chase cut a striking figure in his white spats, bejeweled cravat, flat-brimmed top hat, pince nez, cutaway, and a pointed grey beard topped by a handlebar moustache. A carnation in his buttonhole completed the effect. Pène du Bois remembered him as a "crisp little man, a dandy,"² who possessed a "glittering personality."³

Chase had his students labor a week over drawings of artistically posed nudes. His criticisms, given once

a week, were as dramatic as his dress and made a great impression on his students. The process caused his students to regard him with a combination of fear and admiration, but they nonetheless learned a great deal from these sessions. Pène du Bois described one of these performances:

He could behave as the leader of a great symphony orchestra might on suddenly hearing a false note shot out from the first violin. He made noises of joy and despair, grunts and moans and sighs.⁴

The painting criticisms were conducted in the same fashion, although there were usually more works to consider. Chase taught his students a fluid painting technique, so that they could record their ideas quickly. By the end of the week students could have anywhere from six to a dozen canvasses ready for inspection. These criticisms were open to the public, and upwards of one hundred people might attend to see Mr. Chase perform.

Chase shared with his students his wide knowledge of art history. He exposed them to Old Masters such as Velasquez and El Greco as well as to contemporary figures like the French Academician Jean-Léon Gérôme. Guy Pène du Bois recalled: "His lectures were famous. His acquaintance with pictures and painters was as wide as his enthusiasm was enormous."⁵ He hoped his students would study these examples carefully, taking seriously the lessons they had to offer. Pène du Bois long remembered the advice that Chase gave his classes, expressed in dictums such as "a head should be round and solid enough to roll down hill."⁶

Chase preached an art for art's sake philosophy to his students—"to the devil with reality and all its vulgar eruptions."⁷ Despite this attitude, however, it was Chase's realism that first impressed his young student. Chase's extraordinarily facile brush could quickly record a fresh fish on canvas with such realism that Pène du Bois then thought "it lacked only odor."⁸ And Chase provided the young artist with the basic tools with which to record what he saw.

He is the characteristic exponent of the old maxim "art for art's sake." He is not bothered with the importance of subject; he paints anything, because anything, seen with the

appreciative eye of the artist, may be more artistically valuable.⁹

After his studies with Robert Henri, he would regard Chase's style and philosophy as being superficial and slick, but now it impressed him greatly. It gave him an early orientation towards a realistic style, even though his conception of what constituted realism would later change.

Chase's most important lesson may have been in the powerful example his career presented to his students. Pène du Bois credited him with having "introduced the idea of the artistic temperament to the American public,"¹⁰ which served to raise the status of the artist in America:

Chase's role in society was of tremendous value to American art. He was filled with the importance of the artist and could defend him with clipped, witty, biting sentences, could even make him acceptable to men convinced that art was an effeminate pastime, the last resort of incompetents. The dullest financiers treated him with respect. Some may even have shivered a little, seeing him approach.¹¹

He imparted to his students the sense that art was a respectable, even an honorable profession. He made them feel good about wanting to be artists. Even those who chose not to follow his style after leaving his class always maintained that pride in being an artist.

Following his studies with Chase, Guy Pène du Bois continued his studies at the New York school, enrolling in a class taught by James Carroll Beckwith (1852-1917). Beckwith had been Chase's assistant in the Men's Life Class, and Pène du Bois remembered him as being "almost as Europeanized in dress and manners"¹² as Chase. Beckwith had studied in Paris during the 1870s at the Ecole des Beaux Arts and under Carolus-Duran in the same class as John Singer Sargent.¹³ His work is characterized by a careful draftsmanship and a strong technical control. He believed in traditional methods, and his students drew from antique statuary rather than from the living model. Another academic Guy Pène du Bois studied with at the school was Frank Vincent Du Mond (1865-1951),¹⁴ but he made little impression on Pène du Bois. Following this Guy moved into a class taught by Kenneth Hayes Miller (1876-1952).

ROBERT HENRI

For Guy Pène du Bois, all instruction at the New York School of Art paled in comparison with that offered by Robert Henri, who had begun to teach there during the 1902-1903 season. Henri's magnetic personality proved to be a "powerful elixir"¹ on the class. Under previous instructors, students would labor to produce carefully drawn nudes. Henri instituted the "quick sketch,"² which had an explosive effect, as Guy Pène du Bois later recalled:

Henri set the class in an uproar. Completely overturned the apple cart: displaced art by life, discarded technic, broke the prevailing gods as easily as brittle porcelain. The talk was uncompromising, the approach unobtrusive, the result pandemonium.³

Henri's philosophy was a revelation to Guy Pène du Bois, who remembered that "life certainly did that day stride into a life class."⁴ When Henri replaced Chase's art-for-art's-sake philosophy with an "art for life's sake"⁵ one, he turned the class into a "seat of the sedition among the young."⁶ Henri counseled his students:

An artist must be a man first. He must stand on his own feet, see with his own eyes, the brave eyes of bold manhood, and report his findings in the straight-forward unfinicky manner of the male.⁷

Henri forbade his students the use of small brushes so that they could record what they saw with bold, vigorous strokes. Henri compounded a healthy unit of art and manhood, believing that "he was creating a class of men. The student of arts must be a man first, with a good strong conscience and the courage to live up to it. Art could come later."⁸

Guy Pène du Bois' fellow students included George Bellows, Gifford Beal, Homer Boss, Patrick Henry Bruce, Glenn O. Coleman, Arnold Friedman, Edward Hopper, Rockwell Kent, Walter Pach, and Vachel Lindsay, whom Henri advised to abandon painting in favor of poetry. Many of these remained his lifelong friends. Of his classmates Hopper was, he remembered, "the best man we had at school."⁹

Henri did not expect his students to copy him, as he told them: "I have little interest in teaching you what I know. I want to stimulate you to tell me what

you know."¹⁰ He encouraged them to be true to their own visions, wanted them not to be influenced by what critics might think, and told them to devise their own technique to express this vision. Their technique was a means to an end, not an end in itself:

After all, the goal is not making art, it is making a life. Those who live their lives will leave the stuff that is really art. Art is the result. It is the trace of those who have led their lives.¹¹

Henri encouraged his students to adopt a reduced palette of earth colors. He felt that colors of low intensity and somber hue expressed best a serious view of life. As Eakins and Anshutz had instructed him, Henri taught his students to paint directly on the canvas. Following Henri's example, his students stopped making careful preliminary sketches for compositions in favor of executing their subjects spontaneously and directly. In fact, from this point on Guy Pène du Bois never returned to the practice of making preliminary sketches. Although his drawings frequently parallel his paintings, they are not so much studies for them as variations on a similar theme. He worked directly on canvas or panel, resolving the formal problems as they presented themselves there.

As do all teachers, Henri encouraged his students to look at artists he admired—Courbet, Millet, Hals, Homer, Daumier, Manet, Ryder, Rembrandt, Chardin, and others. In his view, these artists took as their subject matter the everyday life around them, presenting it in a straight-forward unidealized manner, achieving a balance between artifice and life. That they had often challenged the accepted conventions of their day, as Henri was doing, made their example worthy of particular scrutiny by his students. He did not want them to copy the artists he admired, however. Rather he wanted them to comprehend what they had accomplished.

Although a magnetic teacher and a lucid speaker, Henri was not dogmatic and did not encourage his students to imitate him:

It is never an attempt to impress upon the student the preceptor's personality so that weak imitation results, nor is it the hard fast routine of an academic formula. It is rather as a guide to self-education that Henri has proven himself so exceptional.¹²

Henri sought to nurture the student's consciousness of all around him so that the young artist would look carefully and create compositions that expressed his personal vision. He taught them to be alert to the life they saw. He indicated possibilities which they could then explore for their own purposes. His philosophy carried the straight-forward message that art must interpret life. Henri urged his students to look to the life they knew best and felt most comfortable with for their material. What the artist felt about a particular subject was as important as the subject itself.

Even Henri's criticisms differed from Chase's. Where Chase's style had been theatrical and audience-oriented, Henri's was conversational and personal, in keeping with the individual sense of worth he sought to instill in his students. He worked patiently with each student, trying to help him develop his own personal vision.

Guy Pène du Bois served for a number of years as the monitor of "that rough-riding class,"¹³ helping Henri, whose students took up all manner of strenuous activity with Theodore Rooseveltian enthusiasm—boxing, handball, gymnastics, and baseball. He considered Henri "one of the greatest teachers of painting of our time."¹⁴ His admiration was shared by others. Forbes Watson, for example, remembered:

It would be hard to find an ex-student of Henri's classes who did not look back with gratitude and enthusiasm for the inspiration that he gave. He was the first to rouse his students to the joy of painting and he it was who taught them to respect their own gifts, which is the most fertile of all teaching.¹⁵

What Pène du Bois gained from his studies with Henri stayed with him all his life. These years established the foundation for both his painting and his criticism, as he subsequently remarked:

It is with the New York Realists that I began as a painter and then, later on, as a writer. They were natural men, liking life well enough to want to tear off the veil thrown so modestly or priggishly over it by the prevailing good taste. They saw or tried to see for themselves.¹⁶

Although Henri's philosophy provided the basis for Guy Pène du Bois' own artistic credo, he regarded Henri's later work as facile and casual, less expressive

and more repetitious. It may have become difficult for Henri to maintain that fighting stance that gave his philosophy its original vigor and meaning as he came to be increasingly accepted. Pène du Bois eventually realized that Henri's philosophy was too simple and romantic a one to be steadfastly followed for an entire career. Always highly critical of blind allegiance to any system, he could not unquestioningly follow Henri's philosophy, with which he was personally sympathetic, any more than he could Chase's. In the final analysis, he felt both Chase and Henri "may be counted as of great value to American art because of their influence as men rather than painters."¹⁷

While still a student with Henri, Pène du Bois decided to try his hand at teaching. In December, 1904, he announced that he intended to establish an art school on Staten Island with Julian Onderdonk for "the purpose of developing in art students the faculty to be independent of schools and the courage to be faithful to nature."¹⁸ It is unlikely that this project materialized since he went to Europe the following Spring.

His studies with Henri provided the foundation for his later criticism. They instilled in him the firm belief that for art to be viable it had to be closely connected with life. The further removed a composition became from life, the less its validity as a work of art. He described his earliest critical stances:

Impertinence resided in this youthful assumption of superior knowledge. But my critical career began when I was twenty-two years old. It was naturally easy for me to be positive, especially since the sum of my knowledge was small. It was simple and composed of so few parts that they could be known from all sides and thoroughly in no time at all. It seems to me that the only test I applied to an artist was merely whether he was or was not a realist.¹⁹

While Pène du Bois' criticism became more sophisticated, the realist philosophy underlying it remained fundamental. He felt that "art is not a question of art but a question of life"²⁰ and maintained that "as a realist I took life far more seriously than art."²¹ He believed that "art when there is no life in it is just as dead and just as worthless as a body when there is no life in it."²²

Realism for Pène du Bois was not simply a depiction of surface detail or a group of carefully rendered and objectively observed facts, but rather a whole approach to life and art. He made a careful distinction between illustration and true realism.²³ An artist like Meissonier wished to present accurate, but superficial, details and was therefore merely an illustrator, whereas someone like Rodin, who probed more deeply, conveying a sense of real life and the human side of his subjects, was a realist. Pène du Bois cautioned against confusing the realist with the literal painter, warning that "facts to the creative mind are the means to an end . . . not in themselves an end."²⁴ He firmly believed:

The artist is not an illustrator. He does not repeat a scene, he interprets it. He may do this in form, color, rhythm, in all of these things, but they must have come through him, very soundly through him, before they have any artistic validity whatever. Realism is half symbolism.²⁵

For Pène du Bois, an artist made choices regarding what to put on canvas, and the result showed what he felt about life. The choices were subjective; the end result as symbolic as it was real. It was an approach he followed in his own art. The idea that art was superior to life, held by the Academicians, was an anathema to Pène du Bois. "The truth is that I have damned little interest in art," he once noted somewhat melodramatically in his diary, "and that when my painting does not record the life I see and like, then I cannot find anything in the picture worth keeping."²⁶ He realized, however, that his approach would never become fashionable in America: "In a country whose art lovers whisper in picture galleries it is inevitable that the men who put art above life will be considered the greater artists."²⁷ He felt Americans preferred their art separated from life. This attitude informed his criticism, which generally focused on realist artists. Some, like Gifford Beal and Hopper, had been in Henri's class with him; others were artists like himself who were thoughtfully exploring American themes and were committed to an essentially realistic style.

FIRST TRIP ABROAD

In 1905, when Henri Pène du Bois was being sent abroad by the *New York American* to review exhibitions, he took his son along. As Paris was in Guy's mind "the great goal of the art student of that day,"¹ he was naturally excited. Early in April they embarked on the *Etruria*.

Fresh out of Henri's class, Guy, on the voyage over, in a rare conversation with his father about his interests, enthusiastically related what he had been learning. To his dismay, he found that his father was "not on that Henri side of the fence at all,"² but rather felt the "artist must above all be an aristocrat—a man apart."³ Part of his father's distrust of realism came from his belief that "facts frequently misled and often enslaved."⁴ His father had no real sympathy for Henri's sort of realism. "There was nothing wrong with realism," he felt, "but men should sometimes get clear of fleshpots."⁵

After landing in England, they proceeded to London, where they spent several weeks. The father gave Guy ample funds with which to investigate the city on his own. At the encouragement of his father, he explored the marvels of the British Museum, the Wallace Collection, the National Gallery, and other public collections. His father had hoped that these museums would counteract Henri's too strongly realistic philosophy, which he feared had seized his son's imagination. He underestimated Guy's deep commitment to this approach, however.

Despite the great museums and comfortable living circumstances, Guy did not enjoy London, finding it "enormous and cold."⁶ In contrast, he regarded New York City at the time as "a small town with a considerable amount of friendly intimacy."⁷ Although impressed with the Elgin Marbles and Rubens, he grew to regard the English as "completely beyond the influence of art,"⁸ and looked forward to leaving.

After several weeks father and son proceeded to France, where Guy felt "as might a native who had returned home after a terribly long enforced absence. Everything was enchanting."⁹ Years later he recalled his feelings upon arriving in Paris: "After London's ponderous drone, the rhythms of Paris seemed re-

doubled in gaiety. . . . We threw off London's shroud and laughed out loud. Here was light and air and grace."¹⁰ He began to sketch what he saw almost immediately.

Once they were settled in Paris, Henri Pène du Bois introduced Guy to his literary friends, who helped the young artist secure a suitable studio on the Left Bank. With these arrangements made, Guy decided to take a vacation at a seaside fishing village in Brittany, where he met Demetrius Galanis, a printmaker working as a cartoonist for *l'Asiette au Beurre*. Galanis, who was to remain a lifelong friend, put Guy in touch with local artists. He felt right at home, for he found these artists sympathetic to Henri's philosophy of representing life honestly.

Returning to Paris after his vacation, Guy Pène du Bois settled into his small studio, located directly across the street from the American Art Association, a club sponsored by Rodman Wanamaker. He took some of his meals here and was able to meet with the American students of architecture, art, music, and literature who also ate there. Among the more established artists he met were: Alfred Maurer, Carl Frieske, George Ade, George Elmer Browne, John Noble, and Henry Ossawa Tanner.

A few artists he had known in New York were also in Paris, and he renewed old acquaintances. One was a former fellow student in the Henri class, Patrick Henry Bruce. Bruce then lived in a small studio set in a garden on the Boulevard Arago, which Pène du Bois remembered as being "a rendezvous for Americans,"¹¹ where "art was talked of seriously, frowningly, with no funny business."¹² Maurice Sterne occupied a studio directly opposite Bruce's, and Pène du Bois met him too. He began visiting the galleries with his friends to see what was being shown there. Galanis introduced him to the work of Cézanne, and Mahonri Young first exposed him to Renoir.

Guy Pène du Bois began to enjoy cafe life with his friends, frequenting "almost daily"¹³ the Café du Dôme, which he remembered as the "Anglo-American cafe,"¹⁴ and the Closerie des Lilas, which served as a favorite gathering place for Greek and Spanish artists. With his friend Galanis he began to attend the

Concert Rouge, where admission was only twenty cents, a price that included one free drink. Guy always went willingly when it was suggested, for he found the "concert hall was a good place in which to sketch."¹⁵

When he was not socializing, Guy Pène du Bois worked hard at painting. He studied briefly at the Académie Colarossi, popular with many American students, as well as took a few private lessons from Théophile Steinlen. Pène du Bois left no record of his studies in Paris, and it does not seem that he pursued them for long. His true teacher while he was in France turned out to be the boulevards he wandered, the cafes he frequented, and the gatherings he attended. At these he was able to observe contemporary French life. Now on his own, he applied all he had learned from Henri, looking intensely at what he saw, sketching constantly, and jotting down ideas that would inspire his paintings for the remainder of his career.

His sketch pad was with him wherever he went. A number of drawings dating from his first Parisian visit survive, among them *Couple at Table in Park* and *Luxembourg Gardens* (Nos. 1, 3). All quickly sketched, they reveal not only the sort of subject matter that typically appealed to him, but also the sense of sharp characterization with which he was able to observe a scene. In *Café d'Harcourt* and *Henriette's* (Nos. 4, 5), both from 1905-1906, he captured with broad strokes the ambience of Parisian cafes. Works dating from this period, such as *Lady in Bed* (No. 2), are small in size and intimate in feeling.

His paintings and drawings deal with similar subjects. He sought his subject matter in those places where fashionable people gathered, especially in public gardens and in cafes. Observing all manner of social interaction fascinated him. The people he saw visiting on park benches, strolling on the avenues, and relaxing in cafes presented inexhaustible possibilities. Cafes in particular appealed to him, and with a few quick strokes he captured their relaxed yet lively atmosphere. These scenes are all very identifiable—the cafes are known, as were most of the individuals he depicted—but he must also have had in mind paintings of similar subjects by Toulouse-Lautrec and Degas.

This unencumbered and cheerful existence continued until May 1906, when his father, who had been away, telegraphed suddenly from Gibraltar that he was very sick. Suffering from a combination of bronchitis and a heart condition, he returned to Paris with the intention of resting until he was well enough to travel. After two months his doctors thought he was strong enough to attempt the journey home. Three days out to sea, Henri Pène du Bois died at the age of forty-seven.¹⁶

NEW YORK AMERICAN

With the death of his father, Guy Pène du Bois had to stop being an art student and start making a living. Because his father had been a writer, it seemed only natural that his son become one too:

When the time came to think about making a living, I thought about writing and started to write. It was the way one made money; it was the only way I knew. If my father had been a grocer, then I would have known that one worked at groceries. I would have been a grocer.¹

On the strength of his father's work, the *New York American* hired Pène du Bois as a general reporter, with the understanding that he would be made an art critic once he had mastered the fundamentals of reporting. After two "sterile"² weeks at police headquarters on Mulberry Street, he was transferred to the Tenderloin Police Station, a livelier precinct located in the center of the theatrical hotel district. He began with high ideals: "I still believed that the profession might lead within itself into the finest niche or compartment of the temple of literature."³ He kept a dictionary of synonyms with him and spent hours laboring over his two hundred words of copy. Seasoned reporters must have been amused at this serious, but largely ineffectual, new reporter; however, the sketches he made of them and the activities of the station broke the ice, and soon he was accepted by all.

It quickly became apparent that Guy Pène du Bois was not terribly well suited for his new position. As he remembered:

I had very little curiosity, that major reportorial asset, and few other assets, except an ability to write, which holds a

minor place in the reporter's roll of virtues. My nose for news, if I ever had one, was embryonic.⁴

His dislike of facts quickly frustrated his superiors, who soon realized that he "couldn't be counted on to return from an assignment with more than half the required details."⁵ With the Hearst paper's emphasis on murder and scandal, he had the opportunity to cover, if incompletely, the major stories of the day, including Harry Thaw's trial for the murder of Stanford White.

Guy Pène du Bois enjoyed good relations with the reporters from other papers, who all shared a disordered office at the station. The office was a lively place that he characterized as a "madhouse."⁶ The newspaper staff was constantly changing. New editors would suddenly appear and would be just as quickly fired. Never having a clear idea of who they were working for or what they were expected to do, it is a wonder any work was accomplished at all. The conversation was always lively. The disorganization of the office was increased by the spirited pinochle games and drinking. In a station that saw some pretty rough types brought in, Pène du Bois could not remember "whether the office or the station was more sordid."⁷

His sketches of courtroom scenes provided subjects for his drawings and eventually paintings. Some, like the drawing *The Houseworkers* (No. 8), would be done on the spot while he was covering a particular event for the paper. With a few deft strokes of his pen, he captured the toughness of the prostitutes, as well as some of the sadness of their situation in life. Others, like the drawing *The Law* (c. 1915), or the paintings *Lawyers* (1919) or *Corridor* (1914), were done long after the fact (Nos. 17, 23, 14). But the view he gives is sharp and incisive, presenting an immediate sense of precisely what he thought of the people he encountered there. He reserved his most biting comments for those in official positions like judges, lawyers, and policemen, whom he often portrayed as overweight and pompous.

In his drawing *The Law* (No. 17) he has discarded the quick, almost nervous line of his earlier pen-and-ink sketches in favor of broadly conceived areas,

heavily outlined, reducing the scene to an interplay of volumes. In *Lawyers* (No. 23) two well-fed and sneering lawyers are set against a bright blue background. They seem to be filled with air, their balloon-like heads topping their portly bodies. These works display a biting disdain, reminiscent of Daumier, even though they were not intended to stimulate social change. *Corridor* of 1914 (No. 14) is an important transitional work of this period. Like Pène du Bois' earliest works, it contains a specifically identifiable scene, but in this case it is more generalized. He is beginning to think in terms of a type: the lawyers talking in the background are early examples of the bulbous, pompous figures that become common in his work in the 1920s. Detail is reduced as he more effectively employs abstract forms to express his feelings about these people. As his formal language becomes more precise, his attitudes towards those he depicts become clearer.

With the start of the opera season in 1906, Guy Pène du Bois was appointed music critic of the *New York American*, a position for which he was as unqualified as he had been for police reporting. But his father had been a music critic, so the editors determined that his son would be one too:

My remonstrances, violent and repeated confessions of ignorance were unavailing. William Randolph Hearst wanted cultural matter covered in the paper. To the news men they were a necessary evil, an unspeakable "must." But to spare a good reporter for so innocuous an assignment would be criminal folly. And here was this inefficient Tenderloin cub. I could leave the station in time for the opera.⁸

His Tenderloin work continued in the afternoons, but his evenings were now spent at the Metropolitan Opera. He met the other opera critics who had been friends of his father. Because Guy Pène du Bois was "a very uninformed and earless music critic,"⁹ they generously gave him advice, and his reviews were often summaries of their comments.

Although Pène du Bois' music criticisms were never distinguished, his reportorial duties enabled him to pass some enjoyable evenings out and he was able to interview and meet famous singers of the day. The two winters he spent at the opera gave him more



Fig. 3. "Marionettes at the Metropolitan Opera," *Vanity Fair*, December 1922. Courtesy The Library of Congress, Washington, D.C. Photograph: Breger & Associates.

opportunities to study and sketch a class that became his favorite subject matter. He described his attitude toward his subjects then:

I aspired then, in extreme youth, to be a man of the world—man of the world in contradistinction to man about town. The bland American face was boring. The careless American's affected or natural preference for fatigue dress seemed to me to carry unconsciousness too far, to be a move away from rather than toward civilization. I sought signs or symbols of sophistication. The men in full dress at the opera house, though often uncomfortably constricted in these clothes, were at least attempting to reach the goal of my desire. Those I most admired in the limited choice of that day had the red faces of *bons viveurs*. They were frankly materialistic and could allow a glint to appear in their eyes or even leer, if you like, in the presence of a succulent pudding or a beautiful woman. I never discovered which they preferred. At least, they were not puritans.¹⁰

While he was fascinated by these people, Guy Pène du Bois was not one of them, and he depicted those he saw with biting wit, as in *Marionettes at the Metropolitan Opera* (fig. 3), published in *Vanity Fair* in 1922, and in his pen-and-ink drawing, *Opera Critics* (No. 16). Later he drew on this experience to create some of his most effective works, such as *Opera Box* of 1926 (No. 41). By then, however, he was not so much interested in depicting a specific opera goer as he was in using the form to make a strong figurative statement. And it should be noted that his first sale through a gallery was a painting on an opera theme:

The fact is that during my two years at the opera house I started the series of little pictures of men and women in full dress which first drew attention to my painting, and one of them was the first canvas of mine ever sold by a New York dealer, the Macbeth Gallery. The purchaser was a Peabody of the shirt manufacturing firm, Cluett, Peabody, and Co. The picture showed four men in bulging boiled shirts. I feared for a while it might be used to show how stiff shirt bosoms could go wrong.¹¹

Although his reporting kept him busy, Guy Pène du Bois managed to keep in touch with his former classmates from art school. They would get together for dinner in a small restaurant at the corner of University Place and 13th Street. He recalled these gatherings:

These men also had other jobs and painted in their few free moments, which were fewer than mine. Their jobs were of an odd variety, either because as art students they were unfitted for any other sort or because, needing daylight for painting, they had to choose work which did not interfere with it. Anyway, their jobs failed to give them any feeling of accomplishment or any self-assurance. Mine, on the other hand, filled me much too full of it. I constantly and ruthlessly pricked all the beautiful balloons which they tenderly blew up. I must have been unbearable—and they would have been more kind to me had they been less so.¹²

He had further contact with other artists through exhibitions. Aligned with the most progressive groups of the time, he participated in the groundbreaking exhibitions of the group of independents in 1908 and 1910.

Pène du Bois' works from this early period are heavily brushed and dark in coloring; they deal with

the life he knew. For example, he often painted subjects taken from his life on Staten Island, where he then lived, as in *Staten Island Trolley* or *Wrestlers, Staten Island* (Nos. 10, 6). The latter, small in size but powerful in effect, is characterized by a vigor George Luks would have been proud of. *Circus Tent* (No. 7) with the children so broadly depicted that they almost look like smudges, displays a Jerome Myers-like cheerfulness. He had a hectic schedule with the newspaper, but he still found time to paint. Since he did not have to report to work until 2 P.M., he made full use of the mornings:

Almost all the paintings I did in the parlor and from memory. Rarely larger than twelve by sixteen inches, they were usually completed in from one to three hours. Memories of an incident seen not more than a day before, they were, in this slightly removed sense, actually done from the models.¹³

Despite this dedication, fewer paintings survive from this period than from others. One reason is that he could not devote that much time to painting, but another is that he occasionally put his works to unorthodox use:

Out in the back-yard in Staten Island we would set up old life studies of mine, gallantly particular that they were of men, and shoot them full of holes. As targets they held more sense of reality than the conventional bull's-eye.¹⁴

Henri had urged his students to look for their subject matter in the life around them. As Pène du Bois' schedule permitted him to paint only during those short periods when he was not working, it is not surprising that he found subjects near where he lived. Quickly done, these small works convey a strong sense of immediacy in the events they portray. The light background and bustling figures of *Staten Island Trolley* reveal the carefree and cheerful character of life away from the center of the city. *After the Music Lesson* (No. 9) is an early representation of a motif he would treat throughout his career. He was fascinated by the visual possibilities of a scene containing two figures, often a man and a woman. He enjoyed visually expressing the mysteriousness and tension such scenes evoked in his imagination.

While Guy Pène du Bois worked on the paper, Hearst called on him to perform tasks other than re-

porting. He occasionally served as an art advisor to Hearst, as his father had done, acting as his agent at auctions and researching pieces under consideration. Much to his relief, he gradually began to receive more art assignments, including auctions and exhibitions. Moreover, with his knowledge of French, he was called upon to interview visiting French notables. By 1908 he was writing art criticism full time. He remained with the paper until 1912.

ARMORY SHOW

Guy Pène du Bois early on became involved with the Association of American Painters and Sculptors, the group that was responsible for organizing the Armory Show in 1913.¹ The association had been formed in December, 1911, by Henry Fitch Taylor, Jerome Myers, Elmer MacRae, and Walt Kuhn. Arthur B. Davies established a number of committees to handle different aspects of the upcoming exhibition the association was running. Pène du Bois served on several—the general executive committee, the reception and publicity committee, and the catalogue and general printing committee. His most important contribution was as a member of the publicity committee, composed of himself and Frederick James Gregg of the *New York Sun*. From the start, the association realized that success depended a great deal upon the publicity the exhibition received. Pène du Bois, who had just become editor of *Arts and Decoration*, was in a position to disseminate information.

A special number of *Arts and Decoration*, edited by Guy Pène du Bois, marked the opening of the Armory Show. He was fortunate in having the full support of the young liberal publisher of the magazine, Thomas Walker Ashwall. Intended to be “an enthusiastic blast in celebration of the new freedom in art,”² the March issue contained a range of articles to present a broad overview of the exhibition and its purpose. Included were pieces by Arthur B. Davies, the collector John Quinn, William Glackens, Frederick James Gregg, Jo Davidson, and Mabel Dodge.³ Pène du Bois contributed “The Spirit and the Chronology of the Modern Movement,” in which he traced modern art back to Ingres and Delacroix, then through Courbet, the

Impressionists, and Cézanne, whom he regarded as the “great man” of the modern art movement. He predicted that the Armory Show would have a great effect on American art:

This international exhibition should prove how much we are partners in this great projection. It should stimulate our creative power, show the way to freedom, to independence, throw off the veil of art's traditions that is hung between us and nature and destroy the worn-out formulas which too complacently we have made to serve our purpose. America, with its great appetite for everything good in the world, should find in this exhibition a new stimulus, a fact as great as the declaration of our political independence. We have heretofore been but a foundling on the shore of art. . . . We have youth, energy, ambition—we should do great things when we have found our conception, found our individuality, thrown off the traditional shackles and become free men, looking at naked nature with naked eyes.⁴

Although Guy Pène du Bois had been closely involved in the preparations for the show, he had not seen the modern works until just before it opened, and he shared the confusion of most artists and critics on seeing them for the first time.⁵ His remarks on the most controversial work in the exhibition, *Nude Descending a Staircase*, help make clear the impact of this and works like it on the general public as well as artists and critics:

Marcel Duchamp's *Nude Descending a Staircase* became the most famous picture at the Armory Show because it was the most incomprehensible. It was the most incomprehensible because its title was misleading. There were plenty of equally mysterious pictures but none in which the promise of the title was so definitely unfulfilled. If Marcel Duchamp had called his experiment by a less realistic name, it would have remained one of a number of works catalogued as abstract and on which individual comment was reserved for some future and it was to be hoped not too immediate opportunity. An artist acting as guide to the exhibit, perhaps Walter Pach, was so frequently required to point out the nude in that picture that in what must have been desperate self-defense, he finally learned to counter with, “Can you see the moon in the Moonlight Sonata?” While this was quite irrelevant, since there is nothing visual about a musical composition, it served its purpose and was even repeated seriously whenever any group in those muddled days talked art. Any port was good in that storm.⁶

Six works by Guy Pène du Bois were included in the Armory Show—*Waiter!*, *Interior*, *Twentieth-Cen-*

ture Youth, Cascade, Bois de Boulogne, Virginia, and The Politician.⁷ All were executed in his early, heavily brushed style and explored characteristic themes. Two—*Interior* and *Virginia*—treated domestic, intimate themes of his life at home. *Waiter!* and *Cascade, Bois de Boulogne* depicted patrons in fashionable restaurants, the fat, unhappy gentlemen in both being typical of the *bons viveurs* with which he liked to people his canvasses. *Twentieth-Century Youth* (No. 12) presented the sort of man-about-town *manqué* he may have encountered in his work for the newspapers. *The Politician* continued his attack on the pretenses of corrupt and lazy people in government.

With the great critical success of the exhibition, the members were naturally interested in the final financial statement. Jerome Myers recorded what happened when they met at the Manhattan Hotel to receive the treasurer's report:

When the report was duly laid on the table, a silent drama took place. Guy du Bois was the first to look at it. Shrugging his shoulders, he said simply, "I resign."⁸

Other artists looked at the report. In the end, many followed his lead in resigning, including Henri, Bellows, Luks, Sloan, Lie, Dabo, Myers, and Sherry Frye. While it spelled the end of the association, it gave those resigning a smug feeling of moral victory. As Pène du Bois put it in a letter to Myers the next day:

But, as a matter of fact, I don't believe that I have had so much fun, so amusing an afternoon in a long time. It was a great sight to see the guilty gloom on the faces of the victors.⁹

Guy Pène du Bois published a more extensive account of the proceedings in *Arts and Decoration*:

The reasons for the recent resignation of nine painters from the Society of American Painters and Sculptors, Inc., as the press exploited them have been veiled, prejudiced or vague. The reasons were so commonly understood by all the members present at the meeting of the Society at the Hotel Manhattan on May 18th that it was not found necessary to state them by the resigning body. This was composed of George Bellows, Leon Dabo, Guy Pène du Bois, Sherry Frye, Robert Henri, Jonas Lie, George Luks, Jerome Myers, and John Sloan. These men before the event of the long delayed meeting of the Society had become informed that the men in control of the society had arranged to retain control of the

society. They went to the meeting with full knowledge that anything they might attempt to do would be immediately defeated. And at all vital points they were defeated. The members in control had made up a slate in which appeared the names of the six directors that composed the old board. That they were bent on perpetuating their own term of office was further made apparent in the voting. That showed that the majority of the directors voted for their own re-election. And on that hook hangs the tale. The society was organized for the purpose of furthering interest, not in particular art as the Academy does, but in all art as no society in the world does comprehensively. Its first exhibition, that great one at the Armory, followed the purpose of the society admirably. But since that exhibition the members in control of the society and now in control of the society have become such confirmed extremists that they are blind to the good of anything that is not in their school. They have turned the society into a Cubist, a Futurist, a Post-Impressionist organization as radical and narrow in its aims as the National Academy of Design is radical and narrow in its aims. Any new element in the board of directors would have meant a certain defeat of these radical and narrow aims. Thus that slate, the Tammany methods employed to retain it in its entirety, and the blasting of another idealistic association of artists. That I know was the main reason for the resignation of the nine men already mentioned. There were other smaller reasons—the complete ignorance of the financial status of the association in which the members were kept, despotic employment of the powers given them through the members by the Directors of the Association, among them—but they may scarcely be said to count in the final summing up.¹⁰

The reasons for the break between the modernists and realists were more basic than a simple misunderstanding over what was viewed as financial irregularities or the misuse of proxy votes in the final elections. When they began their efforts for the show, both groups worked together as partners in a great progressive enterprise, in opposition to the fossilized Academy and other restrictive elements in the art world. However, as the preparations for the exhibition progressed, certain members of the association, especially the realists, grew to resent Davies's increasing arrogance and imperiousness in his dealings with them. Davies gave the impression that he had constituted "himself a judge, even a boss of men's work."¹¹ Pène du Bois described the change they perceived in him:

When Arthur B. Davies was made president of the society

sponsoring the Armory Show, he underwent an amazing metamorphosis. He had been a rather perfervid dweller in a land of romance, an invention of his or of his Welsh blood, in which attenuated nudes walked in rhythmic strides borrowed from the languors of lovers. This was a moody and not too healthy world. . . . His presidency produced a dictator, severe, arrogant, implacable. The isolationist strode out in the open—governed with something equivalent to the Terrible Ivan's rod of iron . . . the dragon evolved from that very gentle cocoon.¹²

Kuhn irritated many members as well.

When the exhibition opened, the modernists, whose works were in the minority in the show, received the majority of the publicity. The realists began to feel that the modernists were receiving all the credit for what had actually been a joint effort. The final elections of the association's officers constituted a clear victory for the modernist camp, and the realists could bear it no longer. Guy Pène du Bois, like many of those who resigned, began to regard the modernists as being only interested in sales, and he accused them of changing to a Post-Impressionist style almost overnight in order to cash in on what was now fashionable. Further, when the gallery exhibitions resulting from the interest in the Armory Show began to benefit only the modernists, the realists were jealous.

Although the denouement of the exhibition aligned Guy Pène du Bois solidly with the realist camp and led to his increasingly negative assessments of modernism, he never doubted that the exhibition had been a worthwhile undertaking. In his view the American art world desperately needed the "awakening bomb" ¹³ it provided. Its broad spirit, admitting all styles, unlike the shows at the National Academy of Design, was admirable, even if a viewer did not appreciate all the works shown. He realized that "no art occurrence of recent years had so thoroughly ruffled our placid attitude toward art in general."¹⁴ He knew that it would go down as one of the most influential shows ever held in the United States, and he was proud to have been involved in the undertaking.

Shortly after the Armory Show, Kraushaar Galleries in New York began to handle Pène du Bois' work. It was a long and fruitful association for both of them. In general, however, the artist had little re-

gard for most dealers he encountered, feeling that they cared little about the artists whose work they sold, except for the commissions they took. His attitude can vividly be seen in his painting of 1925, *The Art Dealer* (also known as *The Little Redon*),¹⁵ in which an ominous and none-too-honest-looking dealer with a bald head and handlebar moustache holds a still life in his hands as if he were showing it to a potential client. And in 1949 he recalled the establishments such dealers worked in:

At a time when the Whitney Studio, which preceded the Museum by many years, began holding one-man shows, the commercial galleries vied in coldness and aloofness with the museums. Hung in horrible red velvet and a pall of stuffy silence, one was invariably attended in them by an excessively well-mannered gentleman in afternoon clothes who seemed incapable of any straightforward vision without looking down his nose. Art was unquestionably designed for the captivation of tycoons. The little men were certainly not invited to view it and when they did, which was, heavens knows, rarely enough, the feeling of intrusion which must have attacked them could not have greatly helped their appreciation of the works shown.¹⁶

Guy Pène du Bois was fortunate in his own relations with dealers. He admired William Macbeth, who had sold his first painting, for his support of American painters, and he was associated with Kraushaar Galleries for more than thirty years. Kraushaar's philosophy paralleled his own critical stance: "His Americans are sturdy painters generally and, like himself, able to stick to their convictions, to remain unmoved by momentary flashes of fashion."¹⁷

THE WHITNEY STUDIO CLUB

During the teens, Guy Pène du Bois became a close friend of the sculptor Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney (1875-1942). She had established a studio in a remodeled stable at 19 MacDougal Alley in Greenwich Village, called the "Art Alley de Luxe" by Jerome Myers.¹ Whitney became actively involved in the art world and began to sponsor small private shows in her studio. By late 1914 she was working closely with Juliana Force (1876-1948).² In this year she also converted a house on 8 West 8th Street, adjoining her studio, into a gallery and called it the Whitney Studio.

The following spring Whitney founded the Friends of the Young Artists with the purpose of organizing exhibitions based on the principle of no jury, no prizes. The Whitney Studio Club was founded in the spring of 1918. It too was a place where artists could meet and exhibit, although it was more ambitious than what preceded it.³

Juliana Force, as director of the club, created an atmosphere of friendliness and vitality. Since recommendation by a current member was usually sufficient for membership, the club grew rapidly. Even in later years, when artists were required to submit examples of their work for consideration, few were turned away. Artists of all styles and ages belonged, and artists were closely involved in its management. Alexander Brook, for example, served as the assistant director between 1923 and 1927. Dues were set at five dollars a year but seldom collected. First located at 147 West 4th Street, it soon moved to larger quarters at 10 West 8th Street, next to the Whitney Studio. Two years later it was at 14 West 8th Street. Finally it moved for the last time, next door, to an enlarged no. 12.

Although the club was financed by Whitney, who took an active role in its activities, a large measure of its success was due to Force. Force provided a buffer between Whitney and club members, and she also recommended projects or artists to her.

The club embarked on an active exhibition program, one of its most important functions: it held annual shows of members' work and later organized traveling exhibitions to museums around the United States and abroad. Participation was at no cost to the artists, and if they sold any of their work being shown, no commission was taken. It continued the policy of no jury, no prizes. Because of this, exhibitions at the club were characterized by "vitality and discovery."⁴

Whitney's original and stimulating ideas for exhibitions must have provided, both for viewers and participants, an enjoyable alternative to more predictable shows. Her "unconventional, human, and romantic"⁵ methods led her to devise one which Juliana Force titled "indigenous"⁶ in 1918. A number of artists, including Guy Pène du Bois, were invited to partici-

pate.⁷ They drew numbers that assigned them to canvases of varying sizes, already hung and framed on the wall. Each artist was to produce the best possible work within one week's time and was well supplied with "all the creative tools"⁸—liquor, cigarettes, and cigars, as well as paints and brushes. Not surprisingly, there was a great deal of merriment.

At the end of the week a large blank canvas was discovered, and all the artists set to work on it. When completed, they fashioned a signature from the first two letters of each of their names—"Kudo du Slomodach Bey-Oglhi."⁹ The result was rather modern in style, and, of course, the critics did not recognize the signature. The writer for the *Herald* "celebrated a new though somewhat confusing genius in his columns."¹⁰

Although their creation had been rushed, some of the results were quite good in quality. Guy Pène du Bois' contribution, a picture of a plump gentleman admiring a lily, was called by Force *A Window in the Union Club* (No. 22); it was later exhibited at the Royal Academy in London.

Termed "rapid fire"¹¹ by one critic, the results were found to be "remarkably successful and effective."¹² Not all the reviews were favorable, however. James Britton thought "indigestible"¹³ was the appropriate description, feeling that "a more thoroughly 'half-baked' collection of pictures had seldom been shown in New York."¹⁴ Although Britton found the results almost without exception wanting, he felt Pène du Bois achieved results that were both personal and familiar.

Guy Pène du Bois, perhaps with more than a modicum of self-interest and pleasure, enthusiastically reviewed the exhibition:

It may be more profitably considered as an idea than an exhibition, and not because it is a bad exhibition. It is quite the contrary. That it is not an unusual exhibition may be due, however, to the unusualness of the attendant circumstances. There are exceptions, but most of the pictures are characteristic examples—beads of the necklace routine. . . . The characteristic examples may be accounted for on the ground of a natural timidity. The thing which could be most easily realized was done because it was the safest thing to do. . . . As a rule painters live in little worlds to which the great world is a stranger, little corrals surrounded by high

and opaque walls, and the older they grow the more closely do they confine themselves within these walls. Sometimes these walls overlap and are joined so that one painter is enabled to peer into another's corral. But they are rarely opened so that he may get a real view of this world outside of painting and art, which should be his main preoccupation. He prefers to paint his pictures surrounded by others from his brush and amid the familiarities of his own studio. Here the conditions were reversed. The paint, the brushes, the palettes, the surroundings were all new to the painters. Instead of one meeting alone in the familiar corral there were eighteen of them exchanging ideas in an unfamiliar place—a place unfamiliar even to the lighting, for these pictures were all executed under the artificial light in which they are shown. It has been said that great works of art cannot be created this way, but it could just as logically be said that this is the best way to create works of art. This is not a hermit world—one in which we exchange news with Mesopotamia as quickly as we do with Brooklyn. Moreover, it is trying to be democratic. And isolation and democracy are antithetical.¹⁵

Another exhibition held in 1929 was "Circus in Paint." It was declared by Lloyd Goodrich "the gayest and most original show of the season."¹⁶ Kuniyoshi, Sloan, Beal, and Pène du Bois were among the participants. Not only did all the works treat the circus theme, but they were shown in a circus environment. Louis Bouché devised the decorations: canvas tent roofs, gaudily striped stands, painted animals in cages, wooden horses, colored balloons, sawdust on the floor, and peanuts in the galleries set the tone.

In addition to the group exhibitions, the club instituted a program of one-person shows of a member's work. Guy Pène du Bois' exhibition was held during the first year of the club's existence. The show opened in November, 1918, along with an exhibition in an adjoining room of works by Ernest Lawson. As Pène du Bois' first one-man show, it was an important milestone in his career. Naturally he was anxious about it, and he confided to his diary before the show opened:

I'm home trying to prepare for a one-man show which I am to give at the studio of Mrs. H. P. Whitney with Lawson. My pictures seem so poor. One in exhibition at the Montross Gallery now is the worst one there, the least interesting, and they at home are exceptionally so. My whole life is without determination. The only path I tread is the one of the least resistance.¹⁷

The show was generally not well received; one critic wrote:

Mr. du Bois has not as yet achieved sufficient power and vitality in his pictures to group them in a one-man exhibit and hold your interest. One picture may arrest you because it is a clever satire, but the next one offends you because the medium is inadequate. *The Nude*, for instance, in this exhibition had a thin, sprightly air of pink tinted with cream paint. And his nature scenes should never be presented in the same gallery with Lawson. They are too subdued, too non-committal, too reticent to face such a test.¹⁸

Between 1916 and 1930 numerous one-person shows were presented, many of which were the first for the artists shown.¹⁹ Whitney campaigned hard to encourage the public to buy contemporary American art, setting the example herself by purchasing works from Whitney Studio Club exhibitions for her own growing collection.²⁰

Whitney's artist friends enjoyed other benefits because of their association with her. Pène du Bois, for example, frequently attended the opera with her, and his portrait of her, *Opera Box* of 1926 (No. 40), records one of these outings. She also gave him the use of a studio on MacDougal Alley as well as provided financial assistance when needed. Although Whitney arranged for the sale of two of his pictures in July, 1919, for \$1,600, by October he was complaining that "the old wolf is at the door again, larger and hungrier than ever."²¹ When he had money problems, which was frequently, he often turned to her for assistance.

Whitney devised imaginative ways of helping artists so as not to make it seem like charity. In addition to financial benefits, her solutions frequently involved interesting projects well suited to an artist's abilities. Pène du Bois recorded one such commission in his diary:

A few days ago I started the making of a pictorial history of 8 West 8 which commission was given me by Mrs. Force who suggested it to Mrs. Whitney. I have, to date, done a cover design and a portrait of Mrs. Force. I am tremendously interested in the project and feel that it may in the end, contribute not a little to my success. It has, financially, already netted me \$2000. It may start me doing satirical drawings of real importance.²²

The portrait, *Juliana Force at the Whitney Studio Club* (No. 28), may be what he refers to here. Nothing else of the project survives. While Whitney was generous to her friends, she also encouraged them to participate, when they could, in public-spirited organizations, such as the American Artists Mutual Aid Society, to help artists in difficulty because of the war.²³

In June, 1926, Guy Pène du Bois attended the gala dedication of Whitney's monument at St. Nazaire, France, which commemorated the spot where the first contingent of the American Expeditionary Force landed in 1917. It was a sumptuous affair at which she was presented with a Medal of the Legion of Honor from the French minister. Pène du Bois made several witty drawings recording the event—*St. Nazaire Buglers Announcing the Public Kiss*, *St. Nazaire Repopulated by Youth*, and *St. Nazaire Banquet* (Nos. 37, 38, 39).

In 1929 he attended another dedication of her work, the Columbus Monument at Palos, Spain. Whitney arranged a private train to take her personal guests from Paris to Madrid, where they spent a few days resting at the Ritz before proceeding to the site of the monument. Numerous dignitaries attended, including the American ambassador to Spain, Spanish nobles, and other officials. No affair of hers was complete without members of the art world. Jo Davidson, Henry Schnackenberg, and Forbes Watson, as well as Pène du Bois, were among those present. In all, thirty thousand people attended the ceremony.

While Pène du Bois served as editor of *Arts and Decoration*, Whitney published a series of articles in that magazine in 1920 on the theme of "The End of America's Apprenticeship in Art."²⁴ In them she wrote enthusiastically and perceptively on the possibility for vitality in the visual and performing arts in the United States and how American artists were now producing works of marked originality and merit. Business people in America were amassing enormous fortunes that could be a powerful force in the art world. She observed:

The ingredient which we do not put to use in developing the art of America is that of courage, and unless we have cour-

age, our art cannot attain the fullness of its growth. The spirit of all America's force and strength, the spirit of a new land—if only that spirit could exist in art as it does in other forms of activity.²⁵

This was not the only time Pène du Bois helped publicize Whitney's activities. In 1917 he wrote an article describing her collection in his "Mistresses of Famous American Collections" series.²⁶ In 1925 he wrote another piece for *International Studio* entitled "Mrs. Whitney's Journey in Art,"²⁷ in which he explained and defended her achievements and contributions to those who might regard her as only a wealthy society matron dabbling in the arts.

By 1928 the Whitney Studio Club was becoming unwieldy. Numbering about four hundred members, it was no longer able to expand. Whitney decided to disband the club and replace it with the Whitney Studio Galleries. In January, 1930, the Whitney Museum of American Art was founded. Juliana Force was appointed director and Hermon More, Edmund Archer, and Karl Free—all painters—curators. Numbers 8, 10, and 12 West 8th Street were remodeled, and, with a collection numbering some five hundred works, the museum opened to the public in November, 1931.

Guy Pène du Bois was one of many artists represented in the inaugural exhibition.²⁸ Once the museum was established, Whitney and Force continued to rely on the advice of artist friends, such as Guy Pène du Bois, on exhibitions and acquisitions. The museum continued the liberal policies of the Whitney Studio Club, and artists admired Whitney's and Juliana Force's efforts to be closely involved with contemporary American art. "Thank God for Mrs. Force," Pène du Bois wrote in his 1949 acknowledgement of her pivotal role; "she built one of the few museums in the country to which people came freely and, more than that, dared to talk freely, out loud."²⁹

Guy Pène du Bois's interest in collecting caused him to be much concerned with the role of museums. In his view museums in the United States shared the prejudices of American collectors in that they usually avoided American work, especially that of contemporary artists. But he realized that while dealers and

collectors created initial interest in an artist, it was the inclusion of an artist's work in major museum collections that secured his reputation. That is why the Whitney Museum was so crucial. Until it opened, no museum existed solely to serve the needs of living American artists. Numerous museums all over the country exhibited contemporary American art, but few pieces were purchased for permanent collections. Pène du Bois singled out one museum in particular for comment—the Metropolitan Museum of Art. The Hearn Fund had been established there in 1906 for the purchase of contemporary art. Many artists felt, however, that the fund was being used to purchase works by safe artists whose reputations were already established.

MODERNISM

Although liberal, Guy Pène du Bois could never be classified as an avant-garde critic. However, in his earlier writings he was not wholly unsympathetic to the aims of modernism. John I. H. Baur credited Pène du Bois with trying “to make Americans understand the significance of Cézanne and the Cubists”¹ in the Armory Show issue of *Arts and Decoration*. As time went on he was rarely able to say anything positive about the European moderns, but he could still occasionally write favorably of the Americans. He regarded John Marin as “probably the most capable water colorist we have,”² and Charles Demuth as one “able to be a modernist, while not forgetting to be himself.”³

But he could never become genuinely enthusiastic about modern art, even though he was more open-minded about it than were most American critics of the time. He took the time to see the shows of modern works, talk with the artists and dealers about what they were doing, and read the latest publications on the subject with interest. He was too deeply rooted in the Henri tradition, however, to be sympathetic to all that followed Cézanne.

Despite Pène du Bois' strong orientation toward French art, he had little use for later cubist and abstract works produced by the School of Paris. He considered these modernists “intellectual gymnasts”⁴

and felt their followers produced nothing but “extraordinary recipes.”⁵ For him, modernism was simple-minded and egocentric: it was easy to do and its practitioners were being different for its shock value. Pène du Bois thought the aims of the modernists were as rigid and their products as derivative of European models as those of the National Academy of Design. He felt they were extremists without conviction, exhibitionists simply interested in following the latest, fashionable thing. By 1918 he could lament of a Montross group exhibition:

The winter has been over-rich in exhibitions of an anarchistic trend, of pictures of individuals, who, holding individualism as an unobscured aim, rush into self-expression self-consciously, and whether they have anything to say and can say it or not, it is inevitable that a great many wanting any conviction outside of this one. . . .⁶

Although Pène du Bois did not always like what he saw at Alfred Stieglitz's gallery, 291, which he described as “the chapel where he [Stieglitz] used to preach his own reactions to the incomprehensible,”⁷ he did go to exhibitions there. And he at one time even applauded Stieglitz's efforts: “High priest of artistic secessions . . . to him and to him alone does New York owe its first introduction to modern art.”⁸ Pène du Bois has left an amusingly melodramatic record of what it was like for a non-modernist to visit 291:

One enters the studio of a Post Impressionist, if one be wise, not in search for gaiety, of fun at the other's expense, but rather armed for a fray. Entering that stronghold of sedition where Mr. Stieglitz resides, in all his locquacious glory, I find myself buttoning up my coat, making fast all the stray bits of Fancy likely to flap in the wind or to be snipped off by an incisive tongue. Even then I tremble. I must be prepared to give rather than to receive from pictures, the most difficult feat imaginable, and to listen rather than to make conversation. Here it must be conceded that Mr. Stieglitz is very often more interesting than the pictures he defends.⁹

One exhibition at 291 that Guy Pène du Bois did review favorably was Rodin's drawings in 1910. He found them “wonderfully beautiful,”¹⁰ despite their unconventional use of proportion, line, and color, and thought them more successful than those by Matisse, also shown at 291. In his opinion Matisse received far too much publicity and was simply “a disciple of

Cézanne.”¹¹ While he was impressed by the force of Matisse’s work, what made the French artist interesting to Pène du Bois was the fact that Alfred Maurer and Patrick Henry Bruce were influenced by him.¹²

By the early 1930s, any sympathy Guy Pène du Bois had for modern art had disappeared. He looked hopefully for the signs that modern art might be over. Yet, in spite of his antipathy toward modern art, he realized that it had served an important function in the American art world:

Modern art and modern art propaganda whether through antipathy or sympathy have done more to revive interest in art than all the learned dissertations from the pens of scholars of the past generation or two.¹³

1913-1924

In 1911, Guy Pène du Bois married Florence Sherman Duncan (“Floy”), who had three children from a previous marriage: Robert, Donald, and Virginia. Children of their own follow: Yvonne was born in 1913 and William in 1916. The Pène du Bois family (fig. 4) lived at a variety of addresses in New York City during these years—53 West 9th Street, 45 5th Avenue, and Waverly Place. With increasing family responsibilities came financial worries, but on the whole these years were busy and stimulating ones. His writing jobs kept him abreast of developments in the art world and brought him into contact with a wide range of people.

In 1913, Guy Pène du Bois took over as editor of *Arts and Decoration*, replacing Hamilton Easter Field, a position he held intermittently until 1921. He also frequently contributed articles. During this period he weathered several changes of publisher and policy. He first worked under Thomas Walker Ashwall, whose liberality made possible the special Armory Show issue of the magazine. Subsequent publishers were less flexible. Despite these changes, he helped make the magazine one of the major periodicals of the time and earned the praise of prominent figures in the art world.

Under Pène du Bois’ direction, *Arts and Decoration* became a lively publication: its extensive exhibition reviews set a high standard for the treatment of contemporary American art, and its articles treated



Fig. 4. Floy Pène du Bois, with their children, Yvonne and Billy, c.1920. Courtesy Pène du Bois Collection.

important issues and personalities. He saw to it that unusual items were published. One was a series written in 1917 by Jerome Myers, titled "Confidences of an Errant Artist." Posing as a woman painter, Myers wrote in a gossipy but engagingly naive conversational style. Parodying the traditional columnist, he made sharp and witty comments on current figures and events in the art world. In his spoof, Myers mentioned a wide range of avant-garde, established, and progressive people.¹

In June, 1916, Condé Nast, who then owned the magazine, decided *Arts and Decoration* had become too expensive an operation and decided to replace Pène du Bois with Thomas Ashwall as editor. But two months later, in August, Condé Nast still felt the magazine was a financial liability and decided to discontinue the magazine entirely. Pène du Bois and Ashwall searched together for a buyer. This was a difficult period for him, as he was out of a job until a purchaser could be found. He, of course, missed the regular salary, but even more the New York art world. He felt isolated in Nutley, New Jersey, where he was then living, and feared that "as a freelance I am going to be a dismal failure."²

When a new owner, Joseph Judd, bought the magazine, Pène du Bois returned to work. However, in February, 1917, he left to paint. Three years later he needed money and sought another position on the magazine. That he rarely could afford to stop writing in order to paint caused him to wonder: "Will I ever be able to do nothing but paint?"³ When Guy Pène du Bois left *Arts and Decoration* for good early in 1921, there was considerable interest in the art community as to who would edit the magazine and what direction it would take. Field, its former editor, expressed concern with a touch of humor:

Arts and Decoration has sent ashore the two men who were piloting the craft through the shoals of art, Guy Pène du Bois and Forbes Watson. So large a craft needs skillful direction and the art world is wondering who will take the helm. Rumor has it that the control has passed into the hands of a sculptor. Another report is that Mr. Judd has hired Madison Square Garden in order to give a dinner to the ex-editors. I shall accept.⁴

For approximately one year, between 1913 and

1914, Guy Pène du Bois served as an assistant to Royal Cortissoz (1869-1948), the art critic of the *New York Tribune*. However, he published no signed articles in the paper during this period, and it is not entirely clear what his duties were. Although Pène du Bois' critical stance was largely set by this time, the experience was a fruitful one and the two men developed a mutual respect for each other. In 1931, Cortissoz authored the volume in the Whitney Museum's American Artists Series on Guy Pène du Bois and wrote sympathetically on his work.

Cortissoz, who had been writing for the *Tribune* since 1891, belonged to an older generation. His career spanned more than fifty years, and eventually he came to be regarded as "the dean of American critics."⁵ He was "on the traditional side" and belonged "to a creative school which, in suspicion of impulse, places discipline high in the roll of virtues."⁶ Henri Pène du Bois would have found much to admire in his philosophy. In *American Artists*, Cortissoz set forth the principles that had guided his long career:

I am a conservative. I believe that through all the mutations of schools and traditions, for many centuries, art has recognized the validity of certain fundamental laws. I believe in the art that is faithful to those laws, that means a sane vision of nature and an honest craftsmanship. I disbelieve in modernism because it seems to me to flout fundamental laws and to repudiate what I take to be the function of art, the creation of beauty. If modernism has anything legitimate to substitute for the experience of the past it is under obligation to make a convincing demonstration; the burden of proof rests with the innovators.⁷

Although Guy Pène du Bois was generally more liberal than Cortissoz, they did share an appreciation of the Eight and certain other American realists. And Pène du Bois must have found in Cortissoz reinforcement for his own increasing criticisms of modernism.

In April, 1914, Guy Pène du Bois and his family moved from Staten Island to a house with a large spacious studio at 16, The Enclosure, Nutley, New Jersey, intending to remain there for three years. Nutley was within commuting distance of New York City. During part of the time he lived there, Pène du Bois maintained a studio in the city.⁸ Lloyd Goodrich,

who grew up in Nutley, remembered the Enclosure as "a sort of separate little enclave in Nutley habituated by artists."⁹ However, Nutley's isolation from the New York art world made Pène du Bois yearn for his "own kind"¹⁰ of artists, who combined art and life in their work. Those he met in Nutley did not provide much stimulation for him:

We have got into an ordinary crowd here in Nutley—artists for the most part bought and paid for—eking out a living in advertising houses—become advertising draughtsmen and still firmly convinced—I do not know how firmly to be sure—with that everlasting blind hope that someday, someday, they'll throw all this drudgery aside and become famous men—become painters. And how they have forgotten the exact meaning of art.¹¹

He was glad when in 1917 he was able to reestablish himself in the city.

Guy Pène du Bois had considerable contact with other artists living in New York City then. When Jerome Myers and his family moved there around 1916, Pène du Bois became a good friend, and the two men got together often to talk about art and artists. Myers remembered that when Pène du Bois, Alexander Brook, and Peggy Bacon moved to the city, they helped to make the area around 10th Street "a quaint little Latin Quarter of their own."¹²

George Biddle wintered in the city between 1921 and 1923 at 50½ Barrow Street, in the same building as the sculptors Hunt Diederich and Johnny Roberts. Biddle recalled that "all the younger artists at one time or another flowed in and out"¹³ of the building. Biddle's circle provided Pène du Bois with some valuable contacts in the New York art world, but he apparently had few intimates. As he confided to his diary in 1921: "I have no very close friends. . . . I guess that I'm one of the crustaceous animals."¹⁴

During the mid-teens, Guy Pène du Bois became involved in the activities of the Penguin Club, founded by Walt Kuhn.¹⁵ An informal group of artists in revolt against the Academy, it rented rooms in an old brownstone located at 8 West 15th Street. The club required no dues; it was a place where artists could enjoy themselves. Those frequenting the club included Walt Kuhn, Louis Bouché, Alexander Brook, Pop Hart,



Fig. 5. *Guy Pène du Bois*, drawing by Jerome Myers, c.1920. Photograph courtesy Kraushaar Galleries.

Yasuo Kuniyoshi, Guy Pène du Bois, Max Weber, Jules Pascin, George Biddle, and Edward Hopper. A women's auxiliary was established, called the Penguinettes. Jules Pascin designed invitations to the group's activities.¹⁶ By 1920, the club was no longer active. In addition to parties, the club sponsored a variety of activities, including exhibitions, auctions, sketch classes, and the famous annual Penguin Ball, which raised money to cover the upcoming year's expenses. Kuniyoshi recalled:

This small but fertile group helped to establish the roots of contemporary American painting. Considered rebels of their time they waged a vigorous battle against conservatism with might and humor. We knew how to play and enjoy ourselves in those days.¹⁷

Toward the end of World War I, Guy Pène du Bois, Max Weber, Arthur B. Davies, Louis Bouché, Joseph

Stella, and other members and nonmembers of the club collaborated on a series of ten-by-twenty-foot patriotic posters to be displayed on lower 5th Avenue, between 11th and 12th Streets.¹⁸ Kuhn had secured financial backing for the project on which at least twelve artists worked. Pène du Bois recalled his own contribution:

My poster represented the flags of all nations with that of the International Red Cross flying larger and more glorious above them all. But because Germany was an enemy, I was forced to remove the German emblem which I had deliberately put in as a tribute to the impartial generosity of the Red Cross.¹⁹

When the Society of Independent Artists was founded in 1917, Pène du Bois became an active member. He applauded their crusading spirit, which enabled less established artists, like himself, to exhibit. He supported progressive efforts, whether or not he agreed with the position of all of their participants. He admired the challenge they flung at officialdom and at less adventurous artists who were merely content to produce what would sell well. Their exhibitions provided him with another opportunity to rail against what he considered the stagnated exhibitions of the Academy.

Guy Pène du Bois was pleased to note the numbers of people who flocked to the Society's exhibitions, for it indicated that the public wanted an alternative to the offerings of the National Academy. He was encouraged by the apparent interest in contemporary American art. Pène du Bois favorably reviewed these exhibitions, which were far more exciting to him than those mounted by the Academy. As time passed he was less enthusiastic about the increasing number of modernist works shown there, but he continued to favor the spirit of the exhibitions and their challenge to officialdom. Even if many pictures of questionable merit were included, the exhibitions were still worthwhile.

Pène du Bois' biggest complaint with the exhibitions put on by the Society of Independent Artists had to do with what he termed their "exaggerated idealism."²⁰ Payment of the entrance fee guaranteed anyone a place in the show, regardless of quality. Works were hung alphabetically. This practice produced

confusion and disorder. Its democracy was almost as rigid as the Academy's exclusiveness. It was practically anarchic in its single-minded commitment to absolute fairness. Comparing the exhibitions of the Academy and the Independents, Pène du Bois observed:

The first is the product of sophistry, driven to the point of autocracy and the other, the result of the altruism of a freedom loving impracticality. Representing the two extremes of a given thing they are, naturally, both wrong.²¹

Although Pène du Bois disagreed with the Society's justification of an alphabetical hanging on the premise that there could be no contemporary judgment of contemporary work, he still regarded it a viable alternative to the Academy. He hoped the Independents' exhibitions would make the Academy's more competitive. In this way, the quality of both exhibitions would be improved and interest in contemporary art aroused.

The Independents' crusading spirit could not be maintained indefinitely, however. By the 1920s, many of their battles had been won. They had made their point and served their purpose. While Pène du Bois had admired their early energy and youth, he came to feel that their exhibitions were often as mediocre as those of the Academy. He wrote:

The altruism of the Independents has turned their annual show into an asylum for the lame, the halt and the blind. It is quite possible that it has passed the period of its usefulness. It introduces no one worth knowing who is not already known. As was suggested before here, there are so many galleries appealing to so many different tastes in Manhattan at the present time that it has become almost impossible for an artistic statement of even the smallest value to remain unheard. Lucky is the genius who may remain hidden.²²

He also became increasingly disenchanted with their broadmindedness.

World War I, which the United States entered in 1917, did not affect Guy Pène du Bois greatly, although he participated in war relief projects, such as those sponsored by the Whitney Studio Club or the Penguin Club. He did have occasion to write on the relationship between war and art, as his comments on the Victory Arch, a temporary monument commemorating America's war effort, reveal:

The combination of ideas presented by art and war always tempts me to write a tirade against optimists in general, and in particular against those optimists who judge the value of a thing in proportion to its cost. As a solace they will explain that a mighty war will produce a mighty art. . . . But these on sober thought do not seem to be art-producing predicaments any more than are periods of construction and reconstruction. . . . But war and art are not seriously sympathetic ideas. Art thrives upon nature's or life's permanent manifestations. War is an extraordinary eruption, a flash in the pan of peace, and if not artificial at least temporary.²³

While some artists were inspired by the war to make powerful visual statements, subjects suggested by this conflict are uncommon in Pène du Bois' work. An exception is *The Reception* (No. 18). Although undated, the style of the work places it in this period; the French and American flags in the background further suggest it was executed during or immediately following World War I. It is hard to identify the actual subject. Pène du Bois probably did not have in mind a specific event, but rather created a generalized treatment of a kind of public function. Interestingly, it lacks the sarcasm with which he usually treated events of a political nature.

In October, 1917, Guy Pène du Bois began to work for the *New York Post*, replacing Forbes Watson. This was a more satisfying position than he had held on the *New York American* and the *New York Tribune*: he was given greater latitude in choice of subject and more space in which to express his opinions. Unfortunately, the job did not pay well, and in April, 1919, he decided to leave the newspaper. The reasons for leaving were noted in his diary:

I'm sick of writing. . . . I've run out of ideas or run out of fuel. More than that we've run out of money and I really can no longer afford the *Post* job. It's an extravagance—as, moreover, I told them, I am going to try devoting my whole time to painting. I wonder if this critical judgement which I've acquired in the years of practice will be any help. I believe it's help when I come to review my pictures after I've set them aside a week or so. But I find that, tremendously, I need technical practice. My hands are rather dull or awkward. My paint doesn't work as I want it to. There's no fluidity in my touch. . . . This awful need of money. What a damper it is on ambition.²⁴

And, several weeks later, he recorded:

Finished a few days ago my work for the *Post*. And have been painting ever since—painting with all my might. Perhaps my pictures are rather more pleasant than important, but they are pleasant and if I keep at this serious, for it is serious, painting, I think I shall finally arrive at something. I've got to arrive at something. I won't be a second rater. I couldn't stand that.²⁵

During the late teens, Guy Pène du Bois and his family began spending their summers in Westport, Connecticut. First they rented, then, in 1921, purchased a house and studio. They intended to use the place mainly during the summers, renting it out during the winter, when they were in the city. The numerous artists and literary figures living in Westport made it a lively place.²⁶ Their neighbors included F. Scott Fitzgerald and Van Wyck Brooks. It was both inexpensive and charming: land was then fifty dollars an acre, and the town was very quaint. "Besides," as Pène du Bois observed, "to those from New York who settled in Westport the beauty of this latter little place came largely through its sensation of serenity, its great contrast to the chaos of the city."²⁷

At the time they bought their house in Westport, Guy Pène du Bois had been feeling the need to leave the city: "I am anxious to be away from town, to settle down to real work."²⁸ He expected Westport would be free of many of the distractions and pressures that had been a nuisance for him in New York. It turned out to be far from idyllic. Although the family enjoyed the town's "grace, friendliness, gaiety, and tolerance,"²⁹ they found that it was not as peaceful as they had hoped. In fact, Pène du Bois recalled that Westport "excelled the riotousness of New York. There gin and orange juice ruled the days and nights. Talk was an extravaganza. Work was an effort made between parties."³⁰

Many friends from the city came to visit them in their new quarters. There were also frequent parties enlivened by a Prohibition drink devised by Marion Levy, a wealthy bootlegger's wife, a mixture of home-made gin and orange juice called "The Bronx." Pène du Bois was unable to resist all these temptations:

I'm all too human; too readily led into parties, too quickly snared by trivialities and still my painting—a kind of refuge—is more serious at this time than it has ever been.³¹

The social round made it all but impossible for him to work. While he enjoyed the parties, he was concerned over the effect they were having. As he complained in May, 1921: "my old subject matter doesn't come to me here. I can neither write nor paint as I do in town."³² By September little progress had been made:

I've been trying to work here this summer with no result at all. There have been too many parties recently. Yesterday's party put me out of business for today's work. But it has started my conscience going and if I don't work tomorrow, I shall be greatly surprised. My mind's not in working order. I can't even write.³³

Although the family continued to summer there until they went to France in 1924, Guy Pène du Bois only used the Westport studio a short time.³⁴ He found it almost impossible to work there during the summer. In fact, he eventually found it necessary to commute to his hot New York City studio on Lafayette Street. One of the few major works resulting from his experiences in Westport was *The Beach* (No. 30). Painted in 1924, largely from memory, as were most of his works, its three panels depict the Pène du Bois family and various Westport friends on the Compo Beach. Even those stripped of all but their bathing suits maintain that sort of social poise that always fascinated him.

Pène du Bois' diaries reveal that he regarded this picture as a pivotal work. He caught the informal elegance and liveliness that characterized their Westport friends. The formal problems this work presented both intrigued and perplexed him—how to coordinate the mass and color of each person and how to relate the three separate panels. He carefully worked out each problem. The experience prepared him for the major works he was to execute in France in the following years.

In December, 1920, Hamilton Easter Field founded *The Arts*, which quickly became one of the major American art magazines until it ceased publication in October, 1931. Following Field's untimely death in April, 1922, Forbes Watson succeeded him as editor. Backed by Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney, the first new issue appeared in January, 1923. As a frequent con-

tributor of criticism to the magazine, Guy Pène du Bois was able to renew his friendship with Watson (1880-1960), whom he had known from the earliest years of the Whitney Studio Club.³⁵ A liberal critic vitally concerned with the American art world, Watson wrote on many of the issues that Pène du Bois discussed in his articles—collectors, exhibitions, museums, and contemporary artists. Watson differed from Pène du Bois in that he enthusiastically supported modern art, as his appreciative pieces on Picasso, Matisse, Brancusi, and others reveal. His formative years, unlike those of Pène du Bois, did not bear the impress of realism; therefore, he was able to appreciate the work of both realistic and modern European and American artists. Watson's monthly editorials for *The Arts* serve as a barometer of the attitudes and hopes of American artists and critics of the period.

The magazine did not champion any one particular style; it believed all modes were necessary for a vital American art scene. Watson stated this when he clarified the editorial policy of the magazine:

The Arts has always believed that magazines are deadened by too restricted a policy. The policy of this journal, therefore, has been to open its pages not only to ideas found agreeable by its editorial staff but also to ideas which the editors, although disagreeing with them, believe to be stimulating comments upon contemporary creative and aesthetic conditions.³⁶

Guy Pène du Bois voiced the excitement other artists must have felt when the magazine first appeared:

It's the finest art magazine I ever saw. It makes me want to paint. It makes it seem good to be alive. It's so alive itself that to fully express that aliveness I feel as though the word should be written in great big electric letters on the sky.³⁷

Arts Weekly, the successor to *The Arts*, began publication in March, 1932. It intended to continue the independent and liberal policies of its predecessor, but on a weekly basis, so that more timely pieces could be published. Forbes Watson was editor. Serving as associates were a distinguished list of contributors, including Virgil Barker, Catherine Bauer, Margaret Breuning, Guy Pène du Bois, Lloyd Goodrich, Henry-Russell Hitchcock, Philip Johnson, and Lincoln

Kirstein. Unlike *The Arts*, the financial support of *Arts Weekly* was shaky, and Pène du Bois recalled that "each issue awaited donations before going to press. The donors grew scarce. There were delays in publication dates."³⁸ It ceased publication in May, 1932, after only nine issues.

Works of this period continue to treat subjects that had interested him since his first trip to Paris. Many, such as *Waiting for the Train* of 1917 (No. 20), deal with themes of everyday life in the Henri tradition. Here, in a small, darkly colored work, he reveals his careful observation of a familiar sight. Although Pène du Bois preferred not to work from a model, he occasionally employed one, sometimes to good advantage as in *Seated Nude* (No. 21). Gradually he began to interpret his subjects drawn from the fashionable world of urban society through the sleek, simplified forms that are the hallmark of his mature work. In *Night in New York* (also titled *At Martin's*) of 1917 (No. 19), he moved away from the depiction of a specific everyday incident, using stylized figures to make a comment on society.

Pène du Bois' characteristic wit became more pronounced as he matured as an artist. In *Chanticleer* of 1922 (No. 29), he depicts the elegantly dressed man, the type of society fop who must have been a familiar sight to the artist throughout his years as a critic. The title refers to the cocky figure in top hat and tails, with cane in hand and pinkie extended, striding proudly through a gallery like the king of the roost. The intense red background acts as a dazzling foil for the simplified, silhouetted forms. This same approach was also employed in *The Pianist* (No. 13), an equally exciting work of slightly earlier date. Seen from the back, a woman in evening dress, seated at a piano, is watched by a rather mysterious looking gentleman. The scene is electrified by the startling ochre-colored wall.

As is evident from *Chanticleer* and *The Pianist*, Guy Pène du Bois' work underwent a striking change in this period. Not only had the artist found an endless, new source of subject matter in the sophisticated world he knew so well, but his style had taken a fundamental change in direction. Gone are the broad,

visible brushstrokes and earthy colors he had favored until about 1913. More and more he used areas of saturated colors as dramatic foils for unmodulated, simplified figures modeled in flat black to create a bold and dynamic patterned surface.

It is not entirely clear what precisely caused this dramatic shift in style. It is tempting to speculate that works Pène du Bois saw in the Armory Show or in later gallery exhibitions suggested a way for him to use bright colors, bold patterns, and simplified volumes to express his vision of the contemporary scene. Certainly there seems to be more than a superficial resemblance between some of his images and visual effects and the work of Felix Vallotton and the Nabis.

Guy Pène du Bois first began to receive attention as an artist during this period. By this time, he had firmly decided upon the direction his art would take:

I feel more and more that my pictures must seek interest in the faces and forms of people. I am not a landscape painter though I insist continually that I am any kind of painter I want to be. I have never been able to explain my inability to produce good landscapes. It is not entirely a lack of interest in landscape. . . . I am drawn to individuals rather than to masses.³⁹

One of the first major critics to take major notice of him was Royal Cortissoz:

There is no necessity of warning Mr. Guy Pène du Bois against the manniken. His little studies of New York types, full of technical promise, also show that he has the root of the matter in him and is feeling his way toward the very essence of character.⁴⁰

Favorable notices like this spurred his painting ambition:

I'm writing because I have a most ferocious attack of ambition—the worst that has come to me in years. They are always quite inexplicable. This one comes of some returns, favorable returns, which I have had regarding my work. I am as a result writing with greater ardour and painting a lot. But the pictures are far from being satisfactory. I feel that, like the rest of the fellows, I believe nothing heartily enough and though I search in nature for something that will excite me and inspire the big picture—and work hard over bad ones, I seem to get nowhere in particular. The pictures mean nothing. Sometimes they own bits of good color, pleasant I mean, for really good color like really good drawing is in the worth of its significance.⁴¹

The small canvasses Pène du Bois preferred at this point in his career were due in part to the limited amount of time he could devote to painting. With the demands of his job and family responsibilities, he could rarely work without interruption; he stood a better chance of being able to finish a small work than a large one. And it may have been easier for him to concentrate on works of this size since he had problems disciplining himself:

I am among those who find that little work daily is the direct route to less work daily. I become more and more dilatory, more and more inclined to put off all immediate prospects of work. I hate the thing I must do and instead of getting at it and over with it shun it with a calm that becomes every new time more brazen. I rarely trouble now to find excuses for myself and do not even shut my eyes. My conscience is dull and tired as the rest of me.⁴²

He was easily persuaded to attend baseball games or to play cards. Moreover, he was still working out technical problems and was not yet ready to tackle large works. He also felt that he was able to express all he wished in smaller works:

I cannot see any valid excuse for covering a large canvas with a picture that could be concentrated upon a small one. In exhibitions, large exhibitions, where you compete with hundreds of other men it is well to make enough noise, for noise and size are synonymous, to be heard with the rest. It is not wise to be heard above the others unless your sound excels theirs in quality which is not likely. It is in the small pictures more often, when the small picture is considered seriously and not as a sketch, that concentrated and compact energy of expression is to be found.⁴³

Although he was often discouraged with the course his painting was taking, he continued, nonetheless, to have confidence in his vision.

Early in the 1920s, Pène du Bois began to offer classes at the Art Students League.⁴⁴ He never made a great deal of money teaching, although it provided a steady income. At first his teaching did not go well: "I'm teaching at the Art Students League without much success,"⁴⁵ he noted in his diary. As time passed, however, he became more optimistic:

Five of my pupils from the Art Students League paid a visit here today. It was the last day of school. The mountain came to Mohammed. He was pleased. Teaching is a great sop to

vanity. I've signed the contract with the school for next year. Next year I may prove to be a very valuable teacher.⁴⁶

Eventually he grew to regard teaching, as he did writing, as a reliable source of income, but one that took him away from his painting. He complained about the additional classes he taught in his studio: "My time is now too occupied teaching. . . . One student comes three mornings a week, six every afternoon, and a far greater number take two evenings of every week."⁴⁷

Most of his students did not pursue their art careers seriously after studying with him, but many remained close family friends. Some, like Alexander Calder and Jack Tworikov, did not study with him very long, and their mature work was little affected by his style. Others, like Isabel Bishop and Raphael Soyer, were strongly influenced by him in their style, subject matter, and approach.

When Alexander Calder enrolled at the League in September, 1923, he spent a few days in Kenneth Hayes Miller's class before studying briefly with George Biddle. After this he moved on to work with Guy Pène du Bois. He recalled his studies with him:

At the same time, however, I took a liking to the painting of Guy Pène du Bois. I felt his girls looked like woodcarvings, even somewhat like toys. He had a stunt of painting everything black with blue on one side and orange or red on the other. I was interested in what I thought was a certain solidity in the result, though others felt they look like candy-box designs.⁴⁸

Guy Pène du Bois' influence seems to have been more on the young artist's sculpture than on his painting. As Joan Marter has pointed out:

The substantial modeling, stylish figures, and social satire favored by Guy Pène du Bois are not found among the young artist's paintings. However, Calder expressed admiration for Guy Pène du Bois' work, and his early wood carvings are derived from the plastically-conceived figures in his teacher's paintings.⁴⁹

Pène du Bois' paintings also have a strong visual connection with the sculptures of Elie Nadelman. The figural stylization and subject matter found in the works of both artists are strikingly similar. However, there is no evidence that the two had any direct con-

tact. Even those whose style had nothing in common with Guy Pène du Bois still benefited from his teachings, as Jack Tworokov related:

He was an excellent teacher, rather reserved, no effort to impress his students—very thoughtful and considerate of students whose work he respected and very harsh and indifferent to students whose work he did not. He drew relatively few students, he held himself aloof and it was obvious he did not make teaching his career. Although he did not influence my work, my main influence at the time was Cézanne's work, he helped me to understand Cézanne and gave me excellent criticism of my work.⁵⁰

Isabel Bishop and Raphael Soyer did not study with the artist for very long, but both were profoundly affected by their experiences with him. Bishop entered Pène du Bois' class in 1920. She transferred from the New York School of Applied Design for Women to the Art Students League because of her decision to become a painter. She studied with Pène du Bois a short time before going on to Kenneth Hayes Miller's class. While she gained from Miller that strong sense of formal values that characterizes her work today, Guy Pène du Bois remained an important influence. She absorbed from Pène du Bois the belief that what an artist thinks about subject matter is as important as the subject depicted. In *Two Girls Outdoors* (No. 91), her sympathy and understanding of a familiar subject are evident.

Raphael Soyer also began to study with Guy Pène du Bois in 1920 and continued intermittently with him over the course of several years. Carl Zigrosser described why Soyer selected him: "In his shy, fumbling way, he did not know where to turn. He had read some articles by Guy Pène du Bois and went to him for advice, liked him, and finally studied with him when he had saved up enough money to attend the Art Students League."⁵¹ Soyer felt instantly comfortable with Pène du Bois and maintained a relationship with his former teacher even after he had ceased to study with him: "For the first time he had found a teacher with whom he was in rapport, and after leaving du Bois' class he would sometimes bring his paintings to the older artist's studio."⁵²

Guy Pène du Bois proved to be an excellent teacher for Soyer. His undogmatic approach allowed the

younger artist to explore his own interests and establish his own values. Soyer later recalled:

I joined the class of Guy Pène du Bois, why I really don't know. He was one of the most unobtrusive of the teachers. I didn't know his standing in the art world, but I may have seen and liked one of his small genre paintings. Inarticulate and timid as I was, I was able to establish a rapport with this red-faced, also essentially shy man, who looked at me with sarcastic attention from behind his thick glasses. He actually made no attempt to teach me anything. I realize now that he wasn't what is known as an "involved" teacher. As a matter of fact, there was something slightly cynical about him, as if he had said of himself, "I can't teach one to be an artist, but I have to teach to make a living." I liked and respected him, and my work changed merely from being with him.⁵³

In Pène du Bois' class, Soyer gradually discarded the facile style in the manner of Chase and Sargent he had learned while a student at the National Academy of Design.

Guy Pène du Bois strongly influenced Soyer, both in choice of and in attitude toward subject matter. As Soyer remembered:

I painted the *Dancing Lesson* when I had not yet considered myself an artist, when under the influence of Guy Pène du Bois, I began to paint subjects of ordinary interest that were part of my immediate life, in a frank, almost naive manner.⁵⁴

This approach can be seen in Soyer's *Waiting Room* (No. 103). Pène du Bois also helped Soyer gain a sense of his artistic worth:

Slowly I was coming out of my foggy existence. At infrequent intervals I would visit du Bois, overcoming my shyness in my desire to know him, and would show him the paintings I was doing. One day he said, "Take this one to the Daniel Gallery and tell them I sent you."⁵⁵

Soyer was long grateful for this generous gesture, which took place in 1928. He later wished he could do the same for his students: "Now I am a teacher, and every once in a while I become interested in a talented student, and I regret that there is no Daniel Gallery to which I can send him."⁵⁶ When Soyer became a teacher himself at the Art Students League, he conveyed to his students the values Guy Pène du Bois had instilled in him, which Pène du Bois in turn had learned from Robert Henri:

Like my teacher Guy Pène du Bois, I've always felt that one cannot be taught to be an artist, especially today. Art has become individualized and capricious; temporary innovations have replaced standards and traditions. I do believe, however, that even now students can gain from contact with a man whose work they admire.⁵⁷

SECOND TRIP TO FRANCE

By 1924, Guy Pène du Bois wanted a change. He was forty years old and had reached a point in his life and career when the old patterns no longer satisfied him. When he was writing, he yearned to paint. While painting, he often felt the urge to express his thoughts in writing. Moreover, the constant financial worries, particularly when he was not employed as editor or writer, made it difficult for him to concentrate for very long on painting. As a result, he was happy with neither his painting nor his writing. By September he and Floy had made a major decision. They sold their house in Westport, put their household goods in storage, packed their things, and set off for what they thought would be a year, or at most two, in France. It turned out to be five. Pène du Bois had arranged to write articles for several New York publications to bring in additional income.¹

In mid-December, Guy Pène du Bois, Floy, and their children Yvonne and Billy sailed for France. Two of her children, Donald and Robert Duncan, came later. Virginia, who was married by then, remained in the United States. Although the voyage over was a rough one, the friends they made on board helped the time pass quickly. One of the passengers was Isabella Howland, a painter who had been introduced to them by their banker and old friend Philip A. Hutchins. Another was Martin Somers, a journalist who worked for the *Paris Times*.

Landing at Calais, they made their way to Paris, where they spent several days relaxing. They wanted to recover from the nine-day voyage before they began searching for a studio. Delighted to be back in Paris, Pène du Bois settled easily into the pattern of cafe life he remembered so well from his first visit. He saw old friends at the Café du Dôme, including Norman Jacobsen, Jo Davidson, Cecil Howard, and Demetrius Galanis. The pressures of New York must

have seemed very far away.

Although he rented a studio in Paris for a short time, several reasons made him decide to move to the country. Rents were high in the city and he and Floy wanted their resources to last as long as possible. The country was also a better place for children. But the most compelling reason was work. If Pène du Bois was to make the best use of the unencumbered time he now had, he needed a place to work free of distractions. He had been disturbed for some time by the lack of progress in his work and the amount of time he could devote to it. Now that he had the time to paint, he was determined not to waste it.

They rented a small house for eighty dollars a year at Garnes, near Dampierre, in the valley of the Chevreuse, about forty kilometers from Paris. An offshoot of Senlis, it was a picturesque village through which the Yvette River flowed. The population numbered about one hundred, most of whom made their living by quarrying. Guy Pène du Bois added a studio to the house and began to paint.

With the arrival of his two stepsons, the house proved to be too small. Fortunately, they were able to find a more comfortable house nearby for the same rent. It had a large attached barn that he converted into a studio. The mayor lived next door, and the house became known as the "Maison du Bois."²

Garnes was close enough to Paris so that visits could be arranged without difficulty. They often went in to see friends, mostly American artists. Andrew O'Connor, Mahonri Young, Paul Manship, Leon Kroll, Adolf Dehn, William Glackens, Reginald Marsh, and Maurice Prendergast were among those they visited. It was during one of these jaunts that Dehn made his witty caricature of Pène du Bois (fig. 6).

Many paintings by Pène du Bois from this period treat Parisian themes. He sketched continually when in Paris, returning to Garnes to transform what he had observed into finished canvasses. His cafe experiences yielded *Morning, Paris Cafe* (No. 36), a summary of his visual impressions of one patron. In *Girls, Champs Elysées* and *Two Girls, Montmartre* (Nos. 33, 43) he combined observations gained while relax-



Fig. 6. Guy Pène du Bois, drawing by Adolf Dehn, mid 1920s, Courtesy of Virginia Dehn.

ing in the cafes with what he saw when walking to produce a series of promenade pictures depicting young women strolling along the boulevards.

Keenly aware of what it was like to be an American in Paris, Pène du Bois quite naturally found a perfect subject in tourists from home. *Americans in Paris* (No. 46), perhaps his best-known work, reveals how pointed he could be in his observations. His stylized figures were ideal vehicles to project the superficial chic and emptiness of these well-groomed young ladies assiduously absorbing the glories of a twentieth-century "Grand Tour." Their bland uniformity of appearance speaks for their lack of individuality as they rush off to some prescribed destination in their itinerary.

Bal des Quatres Arts (No. 52) of two years later strikes a different note. Set in a cavernous space, this fascinating view of the annual artists' ball in Paris is charged with mystery. The bizarre costumes and ex-

aggerated poses of the figures contribute significantly to the strange, almost decadent atmosphere. The broad, empty background isolates and accentuates the people, and the rich color heightens the strong sculptural qualities of the figures. The group to the right, the poses of their solidly formed bodies frozen in time and space, appear like sculptures on a pedestal. Pène du Bois, as he occasionally did, introduced himself in the composition (he is one of the dancers in the center) thereby providing an amusing comment on the artist's involvement with life.

The Pène du Boises also entertained those who came to visit them at Garnes. Marsden Hartley lived with them for several months while he was painting nearby. Any friends who happened to be around on July 4 or any other holiday would often be organized into teams for lively baseball games, much to the amusement of their French neighbors. All enjoyed these gatherings. As Pène du Bois remarked in his autobiography: "A great many of the friends of those days, drawn together in a foreign land, unblemished by the pull of ambition, could devote undivided attention to play."³

In August, when the rest of France took its summer holiday, Guy Pène du Bois took his family to Viller-sur-Mer, a modest seaside resort town. They often attended the races at nearby Deauville. The fashionable people he saw there must have been more interesting to him than the races. Several works summarize his experiences: *Racetrack, Deauville* (1927) and *Approaching Storm, Racetrack* (1929). *People* (1927), although less specific, must have resulted from similar experiences. Like the opera, the racetrack was an ideal place for him to find subject matter. A whole range of sophisticated people in various roles and poses could always be found, and Pène du Bois must have delighted in observing their social interaction.

These works are important, in part, for the view of contemporary life they present. There are few more skillful delineators than Guy Pène du Bois of the pleasures of the fashionable set at this time. He depicts not only the clothes and poses the fashionable assumed, but he also projects a sense of how they re-

garded themselves. Their chicness is readily apparent in the top-hatted man and cloched woman of *Approaching Storm, Racetrack* (No. 55), where the well-dressed pleasure seekers depart in the face of an impending storm. The composition is tight and the groupings of the figures carefully thought out. The picture has depth and solidity. The figures are more casually elegant and assured in their demeanor than the stiff and uncomfortable forms in *Race Track, Deauville* of 1927 (No. 45). Elegance did not always come easily.

People (No. 48) reveals Guy Pène du Bois' special gifts for creating mystery in his paintings, even when the subject hardly seems mysterious. He has reduced the forms to basics; only the barest outlines suggest facial features. That the purpose for the gathering is not apparent perhaps was intended to imply that these figures are interchangeable and the events they attend basically the same.

The five years Guy Pène du Bois spent in France were among the most fruitful of his career. In this, the first uninterrupted stretch of time he had ever been able to devote to his painting, he explored subjects that had always interested him. During these years he finally discarded the earth tones characteristic of his early manner. His palette lightened and his forms became more solid. Major changes were apparent in his work well before he went to France, but now he was able to pursue in depth certain formal problems and themes. His treatment of particular subjects, such as the racetrack, the cafe, and other gathering places of the rich and fashionable, sharpened with the development of a mature, witty, and urbane style.

Pène du Bois was pleased with his studio in Garnes. Large and light, it fired his painting ambition: "I am going to paint masterpieces in that studio. I can feel it."⁴ The size of his studio affected the scale of his paintings. His canvasses grew larger in the new environment, but he never abandoned entirely the smaller size of his earlier years.

Although Pène du Bois worked hard, he was not always pleased with his progress. In 1925, he complained in his diary: "My work's a muddle. I must be

in a sort of transition period."⁵ But whatever frustrations he experienced, his problems were still very small compared to what he had left behind:

The days in Garnes held a peace which I have never encountered in America. The native land must crowd in irritations about which in a foreign country one may remain dispassionate. There, they concern other people.⁶

On the whole, he was pleased with the development of his work:

It was in Garnes that I learned to paint, that I sometimes managed to dig deeper than the surface and that I also sometimes managed to lend some beauty to the surface of pigment. Life ran smoothly.⁷

The competitive atmosphere of New York that he experienced after the Armory Show did not exist in France. Moreover, when he was not in Paris, there were fewer distractions of the sort that had tempted him in New York; without them his work went smoothly, especially now that he was not bothered by money problems. An artist held a more accepted position in France than in America, and he appreciated it:

The French artist then kept gay or at least managed to keep the semblance of gaiety going. He took his poverty lightly, as a matter of habit or custom. Unlike the American, he never felt the need to conform to a high standard of living in, of course, the material sense, perhaps because his profession has a more assured social position in France.⁸

He and Floy periodically returned to New York during their five-year sojourn in France. The main purpose of these trips was to see Kraushaar, his dealer. With his work selling well, Pène du Bois rarely felt the urge to return to America except for business. Only once, in mid-1926, did he note in his diary: "This is the first time that I've been homesick since coming here a year and a half ago. It is moreover the first time in France."⁹

In addition to trips to New York, the Pène du Boises occasionally traveled to other parts of Europe. In 1927, they visited Anticoli. Guy enjoyed this Italian town, as had many other artists. One major picture resulted from the trip. *Studio Window, Anticoli* (No. 51) marks a departure for Pène du Bois. In this

work he explores the formal possibilities and psychological effect of a single figure whose powerful presence dominates the entire composition.

Work was regularly sent back to New York for exhibition and generally received favorable notices. Kraushaar became increasingly enthusiastic. In fact, he was so pleased that, after one visit to Barnes, he set up an account for the artist to draw on.¹⁰

Although Pène du Bois now enjoyed greater financial security than ever before, he still found it difficult to make ends meet. He began to devise ways of generating some additional income: "I'll have to supplement Kraushaar's allowance by remunerative efforts of my own; meet wealthy people—paint portraits, have occasional bargain sales of pictures."¹¹ And, quite naturally, he also thought about writing again:

I've just finished writing two letters to two editor friends of mine in America in the hope that answers will favor my writing for them. This partly because I shall soon be needing money, and partly, or largely, because I very much need to write again.¹²

He had intended to write occasional articles while in France, but as it turned out he wrote very few.

By late 1929, they had moved away from Barnes and had taken a house in Nice. It was here that he received the news from Kraushaar of the stock market crash in October. With the art market severely damaged, his dealer could no longer maintain an account for them to draw on. Unable to support himself in France, Guy Pène du Bois returned to America.

1930s

By April, 1930, Guy Pène du Bois was back in New York. In France, he forgot the many frustrations that had caused him to leave America, but on his return they seemed more oppressive than ever before. He had lived comfortably abroad, and it was hard for him to adjust to the realization that he could not afford a life style in New York that had been accessible in France. His New York and Westport experiences before leaving for France made him realize that there was a great deal of money around, although he saw little of it himself; however, it was clear to him

on his return that "the fantastic gush of money in senseless circulation had ceased."¹

One of the first problems that faced Pène du Bois was, of course, money. He naturally turned to writing as a way to solve his financial worries. After so many years of being able to devote himself solely to painting, he found it difficult to readjust to the old routine.

Pène du Bois' old colleagues were glad to see him back, as Royal Cortissoz wrote to him:

It did you a lot of good. You are going strong and I am very happy over it, hoping that the public may catch on and that all may be well with you. I'm glad you've returned. No matter how pleasant and stimulating it is over there the artist is like Antaeus, he must keep his feet on the soil—his own soil. It may seem unsympathetic sometimes and unhelpful but at the bottom it remains essential, working some strange alchemy that nothing else will supply. In the meantime I wish you all the good fortune in the world.²

He may not have been overjoyed at having to return to America, but these kind and encouraging words from an old and respected friend must have offered some solace. He was able to visit with other old friends and recorded one such gathering in his watercolor *Group of Artists Friends* (No. 75), in which Ernest Lawson, Jerome Myers, Leon Kroll, Mahonri Young, and others are pictured. Like his paintings, the watercolors of this period reveal a new direction. His earlier dark pen-and-ink sketches have given way to a lighter touch, heightened by delicate washes. The sharp sense of characterization is there, but now handled with greater breadth and assurance.

But even though he had old friends to turn to, the America he found on his return was very different from the one he had left. He felt "like a complete stranger" in his native city.³ He had an inkling of this when he was back in America for a short time early in 1928:

... the irritation of America urges one to an expression of rebellion against it. My memory of America was better than the reality. The friends I'd wanted to see were disappointing. The three years' absence had made too much change in them or in me. I saw very little of them in any case. They did not hunt me up.⁴

During this period Guy Pène du Bois and his fam-

ily lived at a variety of addresses. By early 1939 they had settled at 20 West 10th Street, which would be their home for the remainder of their years in New York.⁵ Louis Bouché also had a studio in the same building,⁶ and the William Glackens family lived nearby at 10 West 9th Street.

He experienced difficulty working at first. The years in France had been fruitful ones, but now, with more worries, it was hard. He continued to explore themes that had interested him in France. For example, *Trapeze Performers* (No. 57) of 1931 was a remembrance of French circuses he saw in Garnes or Paris. The unusual vantage point of the composition high above the audience injects a dynamic note of tension appropriate to the subject matter. The resultant treatment of space is almost Mannerist in the visual plunge from the large figures in the foreground to the small forms in the far distance. The painting's unsettling quality is further accentuated by the mask-like faces.

The circus theme is also treated in *Carnival Interlude* of four years later (No. 68). Tension in this piece is created by the concentration of people in a confined area close to the picture plane and by the ambiguity of the scene. The viewer knows he is witness to the end of some uncommon occurrence, but what that event was is not clear. The lack of definite facial features, the deposition-like pose of the woman, and the satanic figure further contribute to the mysterious, almost ominous mood of the painting.

Pène du Bois' fascination with social gatherings continued, but his earlier biting wit softened. *Girls against the Sky* (No. 73), with its frieze-like composition, serves as an icon for the era. He has depicted these modern graces with sculptural solidity in the act of posing in a role. They are like manikins lined up for viewing. *Club Meeting* and *Nightclub*, both from the mid-1930s (Nos. 71, 65), are variations on a social theme. While these paintings are telling cultural documents, they were not created primarily as commentaries on modern life. The sharpness that may be seen in earlier works mellowed as Pène du Bois became increasingly interested in formal problems connected with depicting figures. His fascination with sophisticated people has broadened into a delight

with the formal possibilities their smooth and sleek bodies presented.

Models appear more frequently in paintings of this period—*Reclining Nude* and *Meditation* (Nos. 72, 70) are cases in point. This shift suggests he was further divorcing his work from the activities of modern life and concentrating on pure form. It is a thematic interest he shared with a number of his realist contemporaries, including Leon Kroll and Eugene Speicher.

Pène du Bois rarely undertook portraits, and those he did were usually disappointing. His was a sensitivity not well suited to the specificity required by a portrait commission. The exceptions to this are the paintings of his daughter Yvonne: for example, *Yvonne in a Purple Coat/Green Dress* (No. 76). Yvonne was not only a subject he knew well, but a person who had the strength of character to stand up to sharp scrutiny.

In the 1930s, Pène du Bois in an effort to make money taught intermittently at the Art Students League. He also organized his own classes during the summers. In 1932, he founded the "Guy Pène du Bois Summer School" in Stonington, Connecticut, which continued off and on until around 1950, when Floy's death and his own poor health made him decide to discontinue it.⁷ Running between July and October, the school presented a variety of offerings. Stonington was an old New England town, and the school's headquarters was a colonial house dating from around 1700. As Pène du Bois described the setting: "Everywhere, there is the flavor of ripe age that has mellowed into extraordinary beauty."⁸ The barn had been remodeled as a studio for classes. The atmosphere was informal and relaxed. Pène du Bois provided daily personal instruction, giving criticism in oil, watercolor, and drawing. The students, some of whom had studied with him earlier in New York, painted from life and portrait models; they also executed still lifes, seascapes, and landscapes. As they worked, he talked to them of his experiences in France. He took a personal interest in each person, offering encouragement, advice, and criticism. He taught them to look carefully and to develop a technique to express what they saw.

Not all summers were spent in Connecticut. During



Fig. 7. The Guy Pène du Bois Summer School, Stonington, Conn., late 1940s. Guy Pène du Bois is seated far right. Courtesy The Pène du Bois Collection.

the 1930s Hilton Leech (1906-1969) ran a summer school at Amagansett on Long Island.⁹ Leech brought Pène du Bois for one summer in 1938.

Back in New York during the winters, Pène du Bois conducted classes in his studio. In *Art Student* (No. 66) he depicted one of his students, Lenna Glackens, painting a model. Although one sitter is identifiable, the work is not a portrait in the usual sense, for Lenna's back is to the viewer, and the model is actually shown twice.

During the early 1930s, a group of his students, who were studying with him at his 10th Street studio, created an informal group they called the Rose Madder Club (fig. 8). It was named in honor of Pène du Bois' predilection for this color, an expensive but not very good quality color popular at this time.¹⁰ He told them that rose madder "was the best way to turn an arm or leg or give an object roundness."¹¹ So his students made prominent use of this color in their paintings. The club "soon became one of most popu-

lar art groups in New York City.”¹² Throughout the 1930s, the club gathered for an annual dinner at the Lafayette Hotel on University Place. Membership regulations were loose, and there were no dues. It proved to be good advertising for the Pène du Bois school. Reginald Marsh was a member of this group and a student of Pène du Bois at the time. He recorded the class in an etching in 1934 (fig. 9). Pène du Bois is shown seated in the lower righthand corner.

MURALS

During the 1930s, Guy Pène du Bois produced a number of murals. His most successful, and those that

Fig. 8. An invitation by Guy Pène du Bois for the Rose Maddier Class, 1930. Courtesy The Pène du Bois Collection.

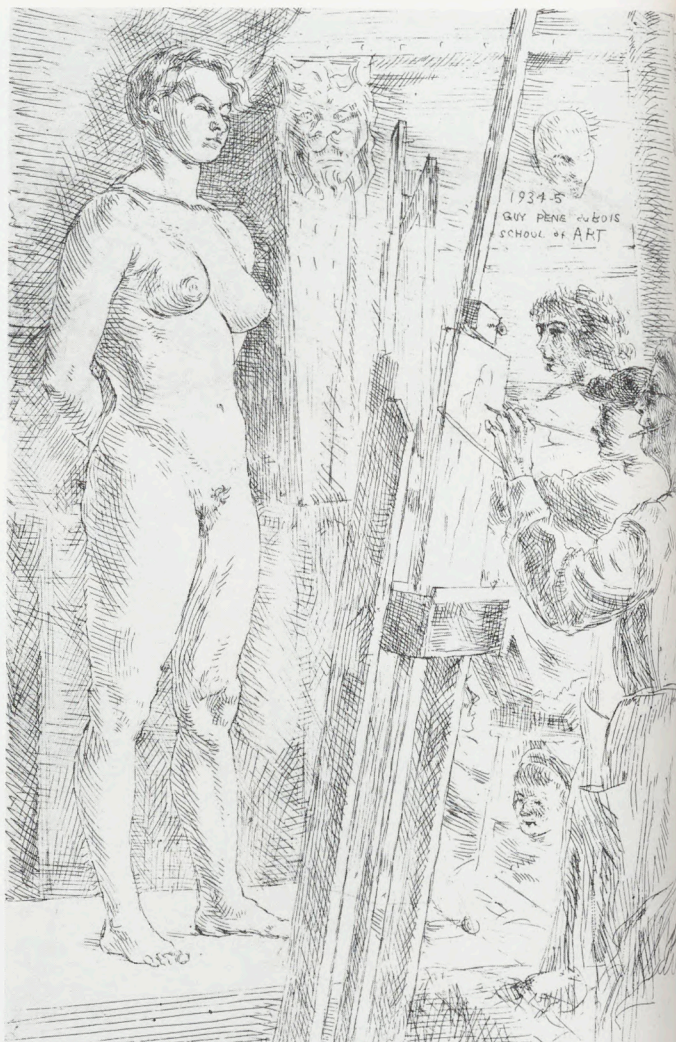
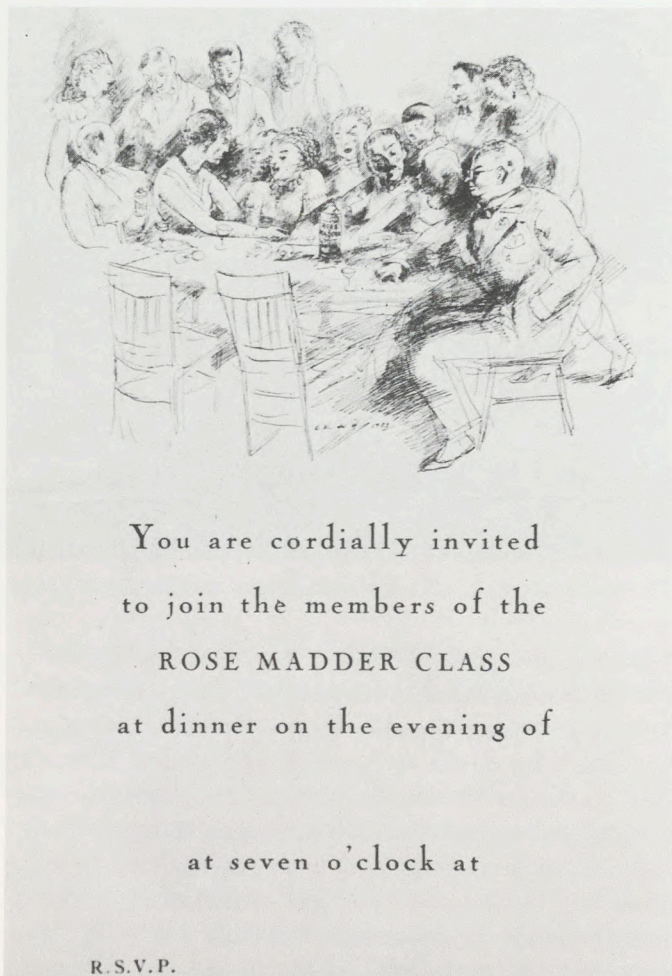


Fig. 9. *The du Bois Class*, etching by Reginald Marsh, 1935. Courtesy The New York Public Library.

undoubtedly brought him the greatest pleasure, were the first he executed. These were done in 1934 for The Jumble Shop, a restaurant frequented by artists and writers in Greenwich Village,¹ located around the corner from Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney’s MacDougal Alley studio. Named after an old antique shop, it was run by Frances Russell and Miss Tucker (“Tuck”).

Soon after opening in 1926, the restaurant became active in the arts, and its importance was well enough recognized by 1932 that Forbes Watson could characterize it as “long a center for artists.”² Yasuo Kuniyo-

shi often sketched the patrons there. Reginald Marsh and Louis Bouché donated pictures, and still others enlivened the walls with caricatures. After several years the restaurant began hanging exhibitions of work by younger artists. As these shows grew, a selection committee was organized, and those who served on it included: Guy Pène du Bois, Henry E. Schnackenberg, Reginald Marsh, Gifford Beal, and Bouché.³

Guy Pène du Bois took as his subject for a mural a costume ball, a characteristic theme for him.⁴ The murals (figs. 10, 11) presented the sort of scenes he had encountered at the Penguin Ball in New York or at artists' parties in Paris. His murals were located not in the main dining room, but in a smaller eating area downstairs. It was a small, low, intimate room whose modest-sized walls, broken up by mirrors and windows, were well suited to Pène du Bois' forms.

Fig. 10. Mural for The Jumble Shop Restaurant, by Guy Pène du Bois, 1934. Photograph: Geoffrey Clements.



Fig. 11. Mural for The Jumble Shop Restaurant, by Guy Pène du Bois, 1934. Photograph: Geoffrey Clements.



In lieu of formal payment, he received credit towards the dinners he took there. Pène du Bois also designed a wine card for the restaurant (fig. 12).

There were also several mural commissions from the government during this period. His first came in 1936 when he was asked to execute a mural for the Saratoga Springs Post Office, sponsored by the Treasury Relief Art Project (TRAP). To obtain final approval for his designs, he submitted pencil sketches early in March. Color studies followed. His use of preliminary studies in this manner is rare in his work. He undoubtedly only did it because government regulations required them. Once work began, Forbes Watson got him an assistant to help with architectural renderings and squaring up.⁵ However, since Pène du Bois preferred to do all his own drawing, he only used

Fig. 12. Wine Card for The Jumble Shop, by Guy Pène du Bois, 1934. The Pène du Bois Collection. Photograph: Breger & Associates.



the assistant for a short time to block out a few areas. Completed in 1937, the mural, *Saratoga in the Racing Season*, treated the same sort of racetrack scene that had interested him in France.⁶ He enjoyed the subject, and his only complaint had to do with the materials the government supplied. Its success made him decide to seek other commissions.

In 1936, on the basis of designs he had submitted to a national competition for a Justice Department building, he was selected for special consideration, although it was not firm what would be available. Specific designs would be requested when a building, close to where he lived, with funds for decoration neared completion.⁷ The work he submitted for this competition may have been his *Emancipation Mural Sketch*.⁸ In any event, it was never realized on a larger scale.

The competition, however, led to another commission. In January, 1937, the Rye, New York, post office was ready for decoration and Pène du Bois' designs were selected. He chose for his theme *John Jay at His Home*, showing Jay about to depart on a trip to visit provincial courts. The subject was suitable, as Jay's house still stood in the area.⁹ Pène du Bois only received one more mural commission. In 1942, he executed *The Landing of the Weston Company in 1622* for the Weymouth post office in Massachusetts (fig. 13). The mundane themes of these murals and their disappointing compositions reveal that his heart simply was not in the task. They were done because he needed the money.

LATER YEARS

Pène du Bois' later years were active ones. Although he was not writing, exhibiting, or painting as much as before, he continued to serve on juries for museum exhibitions and to receive awards. He was made a National Academician in 1940, the year in which his autobiography, *Artists Say the Silliest Things*, was published. The source of the unusual title was an observation made by his good friend William Glackens, who asserted, "artists say the silliest things about painting."¹

Following this he contemplated writing several

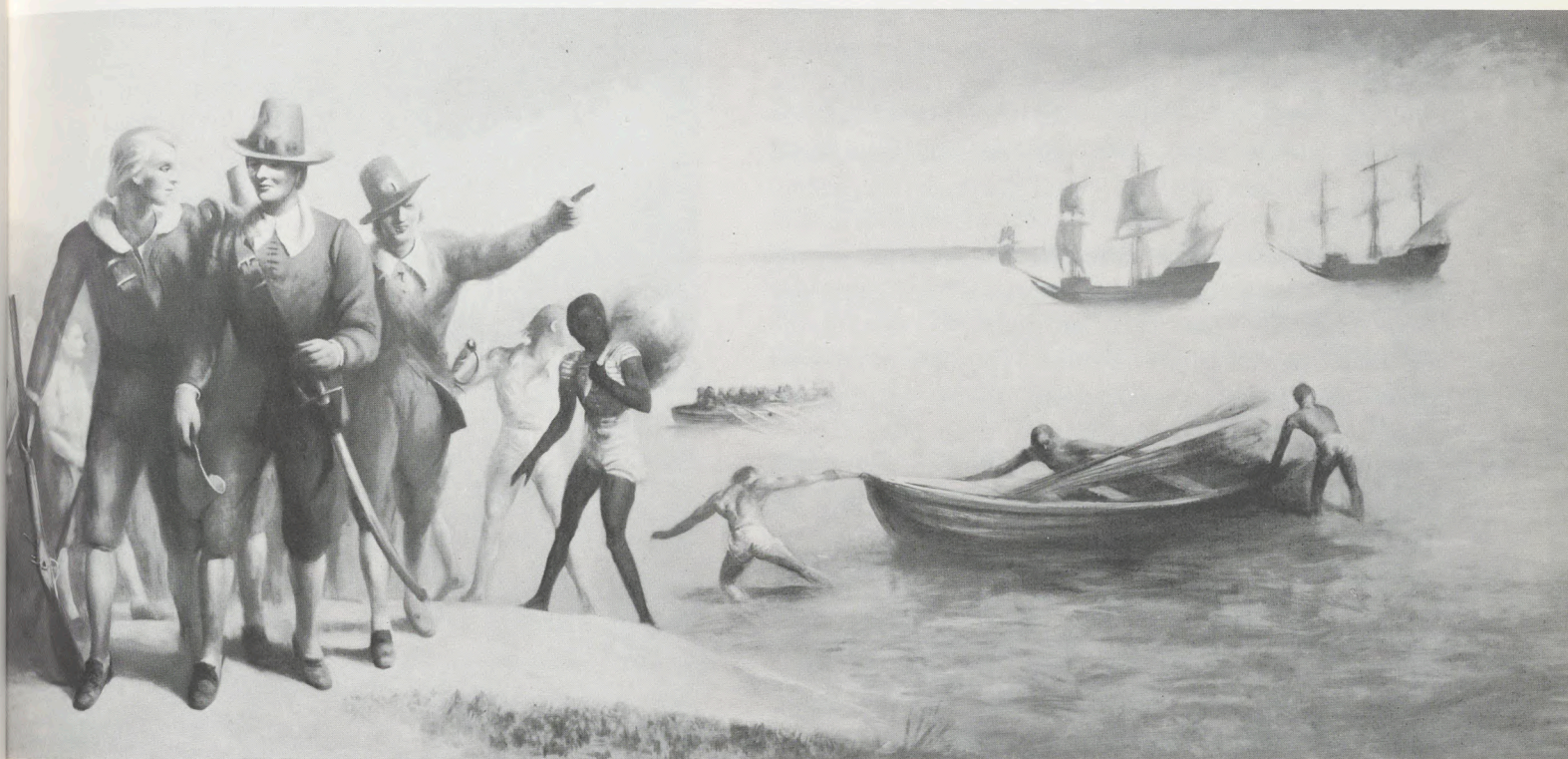


Fig. 13. *Landing of Weston Company in 1622*, painted for the U.S. Post Office, Weymouth, Mass., 1942. Peter A. Juley & Son Collection, reproduced courtesy of the Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C.

more books, but there was little interest on the part of publishers and nothing came of the projects. In 1942, he again turned to teaching, replacing Ernest Fiene as instructor in the day school at Cooper Union. He stayed there until 1946.

Pène du Bois had the first of several heart attacks in 1940. His increasingly poor health meant that he painted less. His work was not selling, and in May, 1947, he broke with Kraushaar Galleries, who had handled him for over twenty-five years.² His troubles increased when Floy suffered a stroke in 1949. She never fully recovered and died in September, 1950, at the age of 68. Also in 1949, the first signs of cancer were detected.

Guy Pène du Bois had good friends nearby who helped him through these difficulties. During this period the Ira Glackens family held "at homes" at their house on 9th Street, to which they invited their friends, including Jerome and Ethel Myers, Everett Shinn, and Guy Pène du Bois. When the Glackens eventually

moved out of their house and studio, Pène du Bois inherited a number of items from them. One was an easel "of the millionaire sort"³ that "will, I hope, make me feel like painting,"⁴ although he worried it would tempt him to paint large, unsalable pictures. He also acquired an overstuffed easy chair, about which he said, "I'm afraid I'll use the chair more than the easel."⁵ He began to spend more time visiting friends.

His increasing health problems during the 1940s often made it difficult for him to paint, but he still managed to produce some pieces. The same themes recur, but the forms, no longer sculpted with light and color, become less solid and more loosely brushed. His canvasses are now suffused with a mysterious light. In *Forty-Second Street* (No. 82), he shows several fashionable women walking in a manner that recalls his earlier promenade pictures. But there is a lightness in the figures and the airy tones that is new. His previous biting wit and impassive monumental

figures are replaced by a genial view of vulnerable, insubstantial humans. He has lost none of his powers of sharp observation of contemporary types, but the mood is nostalgia tinged with ennui. One of his favorite motifs, that of a well dressed but bored woman with her dull and equally bored companion, appears again in *Solitaire* (No. 81) of 1943. Watched by some ancestor who gazes from a portrait on the wall, they are neither interested in the card game nor each other. In *Interlude/Appraisal* (No. 86) of the following year two well-heeled types in an elegant room apparently are sizing-up fellow partygoers. *Absinthe House, New Orleans* of 1946 (No. 85), a variation on the cafe theme explores a scene that could have come from his New Orleans past, although he visited the city during this period.

During these years, Pène du Bois grew increasingly upset with the current art world, complaining: "Every time I think of art in New York I feel like screaming."⁶ He felt that "there never was a period in art equal in confusion to this one."⁷ He deplored what he regarded as the restless and confused state of art, viewing artists he saw as so many corks bobbing aimlessly on an ocean of ideas. He was totally unable to accept modernism as a valid and vital movement. Even criticism was in a sorry state, and he deplored "the gibberish of the fashionable critics."⁸

Increasing illness made it harder for him to work. By the 1950s, he was painting very little, and there are no important canvasses from this period. Even when he was able to pick up the brush, he was rarely happy with what he did:

All I can do is linger and languish over some picture which impressed me as a subject and depresses me when rubbed onto a canvas with a lot of oil and sighs and moans, and grumblings and solitaire to replace a cigarette.⁹

To add to these woes, there was no market for his pictures:

I get very little work done. . . . My dealer has not sold a picture for me in three or four years that I've been with him. I'm an exceedingly unfashionable painter. People seem to have ceased to like being reminded of life in the pictorial form while craving for the crudest realities and obscenities from those other picture makers, the novelists.¹⁰

In September, 1951, Guy Pène du Bois was one of a number of realistic artists invited by Raphael Soyer to discuss current trends in art. Although his health forced him to decline the invitation, he strongly supported the efforts of the group. About ten artists eventually gathered to consider these problems, including Kuniyoshi, Raphael Soyer, Hopper, Shahn, Kroll, Hirsch, and Evergood.¹¹ Pène du Bois wrote to Rico Le Brun of their aims:

Meanwhile there seems to be a group of artists around here which includes Raphael Soyer, Edward Hopper, Ben Shahn, who believe that life or what they consider to be life is still worth talking about and that something should be done to force the modern museum to recognize that fact and to forget the frippery and doppery of so ardently sponsoring the non-objective group. These fellows don't like fashions in art or anywhere. The fashionable should be decried and destroyed.¹²

The group decided to publish a journal—*Reality, A Journal of Artists' Opinions*. Pène du Bois was one of forty-seven artists who signed the statement earlier circulated by Raphael Soyer, which appeared in the first issue:

A group of artists have joined together to discuss their problems. The work of the members of this group is highly diverse in style and conception. Their kinship is a respect and love for the human qualities in painting. The following statement represents their concerted opinion.

All art is an expression of human experience. All the possibilities of art must be explored to broaden this expression. We nevertheless believe that texture and accident, like color, design, and all the other elements of painting, are only the means to a larger end, which is the depiction of man and his world.

Today, mere textural novelty is being presented by a dominant group of museum officials, dealers, and publicity men as the unique manifestation of the artistic intuition. This arbitrary exploitation of a single phase of painting encourages a contempt for the taste and intelligence of the public. We are asked to believe that art is for the future, that only an inner circle is capable of judging contemporary painting, that everybody else must take it on faith. These theories are fixed in a ritual jargon equally incomprehensible to artist and layman. This jargon is particularly confusing to young artists, many of whom are led to accept the excitation of texture and color as the true end of art, even to equate disorder with creation. The dogmatic repetition of these views has produced in the whole world of art an atmosphere of irresponsibility, snobbery, and ignorance.

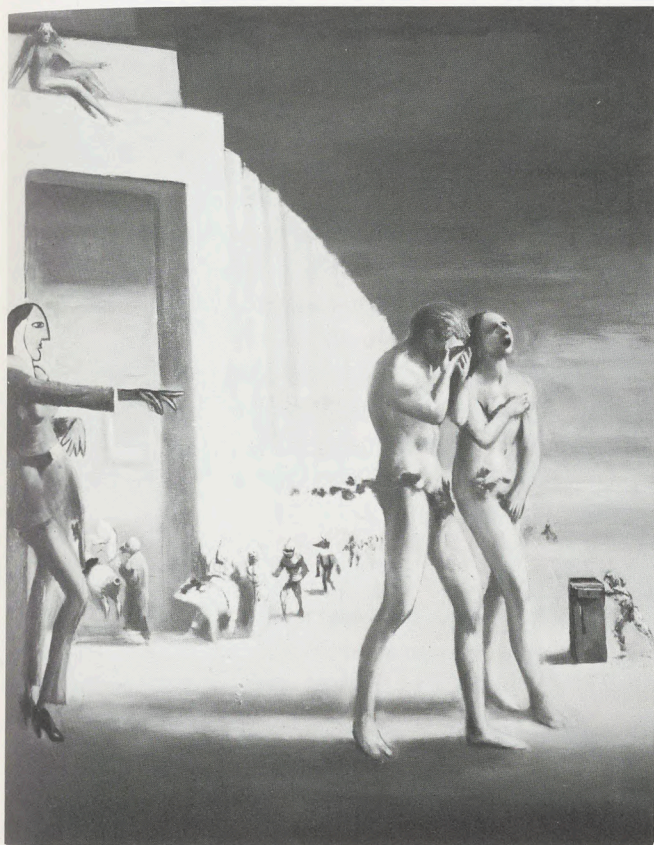


Fig. 14. *Another Expulsion*, by Guy Pène du Bois, 1950. Courtesy The Pène du Bois Collection. Peter A. Juley & Son Collection, reproduced courtesy of the Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C.

We say, in the words of Delacroix: "The men of our profession deny to the fabricators of theories the right to thus dabble in our domain and at our expense." We believe that art cannot become the property of an esoteric cult. We reaffirm the right of the artist to the control of his profession. We will work to restore to art its freedom and dignity as a living language.¹³

The editorial committee of the first issue was composed of Isabel Bishop, Alexander Dobkin, Edward Hopper, Jack Levine, Henry Varnum Poor, Raphael Soyer, and Sol Wilson. By the second issue Maurice Grosser and Abe Lerner were also involved. Although it only appeared for three issues between 1953 and 1955, it was a significant defense of the realistic tradition in the face of modernism.¹⁴ Pène du Bois' attitude at this time is best exemplified by *Another Expulsion* of 1950 (fig. 14), in which a Picasso-like

clown expels Masaccio's Adam and Eve from the realms of art.¹⁵

In February, 1953, Pène du Bois' new landlord decided that his apartment and that of Louis Bouché could no longer be used either as a studio or a classroom in which to give lessons nor could they sublet their studios to anyone, which made it impossible for him to go anywhere else during the summers.¹⁶ Because of this development, he and Yvonne, who was then living with him, decided to go to France, feeling that "Paris will give a change of air and scenery and possibly the energy and ambition to start on a new stretch of painting."¹⁷ They closed up the 10th Street apartment, sold off some things, and put into storage the rest of their belongings. In March, 1953, they left for Paris, where he frequented cafes like the Café des Deux Magots, and renewed contacts with old friends, including Leon Kroll and Reginald Marsh.

He did some painting, but he lacked the energy to sustain a major work, and most of what he did did not satisfy him. He suffered another heart attack late in 1956; poor health forced him to return to the United States. He went to live in Boston with Yvonne and her new husband. His health steadily declined, and it was here that he died of cancer in 1958 at the age of 74.

GUY PENE DU BOIS AND HIS TIMES

The fifteen years I was a critic were a turbulent period in art. The critics' complacencies were constantly being disturbed. The critics themselves staggered under a rain of blows for which they were completely unprepared and by which they were sometimes left in a stunned and helpless condition. Methodically acquired languages of criticism were constantly being outdated. Stranger shapes succeeded strange ones. The critics' desks became littered with piles of art manifestations so new and numerous that, with the rush of the oncoming deadline, they got but a casual or wholesale analysis and tabulation. For all the conscious and righteous broadmindedness of those little angels of unquestioning mercy, the old tickets were rendered useless and the old cubbyholes positive obstructions to the efficient running of the once so beloved filing systems.¹

Guy Pène du Bois' critical career was no less productive than his painting one. His writings span well over forty years of American art history. To read his criti-

cism is to get an in-depth view of a lively and important period. The fact that he was a painter as well serves to make his observations even more valuable to the historian.

Pène du Bois was one of several liberal critics who strove to further interest in contemporary American art. While it would be misleading to regard Guy Pène du Bois as an avant-garde critic, he was liberal in the sense that he accepted as artistically valid a variety of modes of expression. Moreover, he was not as dogmatic as those writing in defense of the academic style. Yet, although he consistently supported contemporary American artists, he had his own bias: he was especially sympathetic to those who, like himself, were continuing the realistic tradition that had begun with the Eight.

His writings reveal a concern with the most important issues facing contemporary American artists. It was, after all, a concern which he shared with fellow artists. This won him high praise from his colleagues, for what he wrote was thorough and solid, firmly based on his own experiences.

Throughout his career, Pène du Bois pursued the twin callings of painter and critic. These two professions did not always coexist in a happy balance. He often claimed publicly (and privately) that he wrote in order to earn a living and painted for pleasure: "I write periodically to obtain money. I paint periodically to express opinions. Most of the time I do nothing at all worth doing."² However, his diaries reveal that he not only felt the need to write, but at times enjoyed doing it. He found that the discipline of writing was a help to him in his painting:

I am sure that writing a little before working is an exercise that painters might find invaluable. The rush to work, forced by conscience, in most cases is not economic. Painters are, the majority, in too great a hurry.³

Having grown up in a literary household, Pène du Bois found writing integral to his being.

Critics wondered about his ability to both write and paint. He himself had doubts. One of his greatest problems was that he was not a disciplined worker. He had trouble settling down, either at painting or writing. In fact, early in his career he worried

whether the time he spent writing would diminish his inspiration in painting. But as people became interested in what he wrote, and he came to realize that he had something worthwhile to say, his confidence grew. Further, he appears to have needed a variety of stimuli: work in one area fueled his energies in another. In 1926, when he was at a peak of creativity, he confided to his diary: "Still I cling to the desire to write, to the feeling that painting is not enough for a man to do, not enough exercise."⁴

What Pène du Bois disliked about writing were the restrictions imposed on him by the editors or publishers. He was constantly bothered by deadlines and having to write on subjects that did not interest him. He complained in 1913:

The truth is that I am nothing more or less than a hack, a modern hack writer. The ideas that are required for my editor—whether they are mine or not matters not at all—must reach his office at a stated time and must be expressed within a stated space in a stated strain. I must be a man of the world one moment, a preacher the next. I must be conservative or radical and borrow the editor's spirit while sitting upon one I consider better—my own. I do not cry against this—I am accustomed to it. Indeed as time passes I find myself—patting my customary laziness upon the back—glad to have my manner of expression readymade like a suit of clothes or a religion.⁵

His body of criticism, however, is so extensive and his observations so perceptive that he clearly did not dislike writing quite as much as he claimed, or at least not all of the time. He enjoyed the people he met through his writing, and he appreciated the forum it provided for his opinions. It is important criticism that bears witness to the major issues of the period. Guy Pène du Bois saw the essential problems of his time clearly and wrote about them with strong feeling and sharp understanding.

As an astute critic, Guy Pène du Bois was capable of making insightful evaluations of his own place in American art:

I am neither a modern nor a consciously and willfully American painter. I have never lived in any of the art colonies, and while my home has been in the Washington Square district for a number of years, I have never been in any sense of the word a Villager. Since my youth, when I was listed

with the New York Realists, as they have been called since the Whitney Museum exhibition of 1937, I have never belonged to or associated with any group of artists. This may be because for a number of years I was an art critic, a not very tactful art critic.⁶

He was never part of an identifiable group such as Henri's Eight or the 14th Street artists who gathered around Kenneth Hayes Miller; he was not associated with a particular charismatic individual, such as Alfred Stieglitz, Mabel Dodge, or Walter Arensberg, and he did not spend time at any of the well-known artist colonies, such as Rockport, Provincetown, Santa Fe, or Woodstock. While he connected himself with other artists who had studied with Henri, they did not meet regularly or mount exhibitions together. Rather he was one of several realistic artists who explored independently in their painting the life around them.

Guy Pène du Bois arrived at his characteristic subject matter early on. What he chose to depict was a conscious choice for him, for he believed that an

artist should very definitely choose his subject matter. He should choose it like a suit of clothes for its fit, comfort and becomingness. The trouble is that most artists acquire theirs ready-made.⁷

He found Henri's philosophy of art and life to be ideally suited to his own, although the Eight's often romantic depictions of life among the poorer classes in New York were not for him. Instead, he preferred the fashionable world of the rich and powerful—the world of garden parties and racetracks, of politics and courtrooms, of operas, theaters, and nightclubs. Certainly his family background went a long way in orienting him toward this subject matter; however, arriving at the vocabulary to record it adequately took longer. As he noted in his diary in 1919:

It's life that I want to put down, now as it has always been. But I find myself demanding more art as I go along, a better language.⁸

By the mid-1920s, he had achieved this vocabulary. Sculptural solidity, eloquent gesture, and resonant color were the hallmarks of his mature style. His artistic statements on modern life became increasingly strong as he reduced and simplified his volumes and tightened his compositions.

In the 1930s, his work took no new direction, but he continued to strengthen those elements that made his style distinctive. His interest in specifically identifiable human events lessened as he placed more emphasis on the formal values of painting. He strove to "make color build form instead of adding it to the form," maintaining:

A good painting must be constructed out of the qualities of color or color's properties. It is a great waste of color, a miserable understanding of its properties, to make it a gossamer decoration on a good drawing.⁹

Early in his career Guy Pène du Bois acquired a reputation as a satirist, a designation he was never able to shake completely. In labeling him a satirist, the critics misunderstood his paintings and his feelings toward his subjects, as he recalled in his autobiography:

It is a travesty of truth that I should through them have become known as a satirist and that this designation should have held through so many years when I portrayed people from pure love of them.¹⁰

From his vantage point, his view of life was more genial than his critics thought. "People are really not so bad," he wrote. "Indeed, what they pretend to be is often worse than what they are."¹¹ The bite in his work came not from bitterness or from a reformer's enthusiasm, but from an interest in humanity. While he exposed the ludicrous pose, self-indulgence, and complacency of the sophisticated urban dweller, he did so without attempting to effect any social change. He did not possess the anger motivating an artist like George Grosz.

In view of his reputation as a satirist, it is not surprising that critics frequently compared Pène du Bois to Daumier. One of the first to make the connection was William B. McCormick.¹² But unlike many other critics who wanted to compare their styles, McCormick saw Pène du Bois' work as being closer to Daumier's paintings than to his caricatures. He felt that the similarities in their work were not so much the result of any direct connection, but rather were due to the fact that both deeply responded to the life around them.

Pène du Bois knew and admired both Daumier's

work and his approach to life: "Daumier is temperamentally of the people, of the solid substantial people, knowing their faults but talking of them in a point of view and language made of their own solid qualities."¹³ He subsequently wrote:

Now I think of Daumier's attitude toward mankind as that of a doting father. He was much more likely to pity than to censure. When he laughed, which was often, he did so in generous and understanding sympathy, laughing with rather than at.¹⁴

Pène du Bois may have made the same judgment about himself. Certainly the two artists were similar in their close investigation of life and in their desire to express their vision of that life as honestly and directly as possible. And the remark that one of Pène du Bois' critics made about him could just as easily have been said of Daumier: that he revealed the "posturing of his contemporaries, without, however, forgetting that he is, after all, one of us."¹⁵

Guy Pène du Bois admired a number of other French artists as well. The work of Forain was praised for its truth, realism, and unidealistic approach;¹⁶ his observations were rooted in real life. Pène du Bois was interested in Steinlen for the same reason, although he considered Steinlen more romantic.

Because of Pène du Bois' French sympathies and his long stay in France, American critics had difficulty accepting his work as American and his position as a strong advocate of American art. During his last year abroad, he became embroiled in a controversy over whether truly American art could be created away from American soil, an issue that was clearly of particular interest to him. This discussion began when, in 1929, he wrote an exhibition catalogue to accompany a show of the work of a now little known painter, Norman Jacobsen, at the Montross Gallery in New York. His essay constituted a defense of American artists who chose to live in Europe. While some critics believed American art could not be American if it was produced abroad, Pène du Bois did not agree with them. American art could be

created wherever American artists chose to work. In his view, these critics were only revealing their provinciality.

Years later, clearly interested in ending further discussion of his artistic nationality, Pène du Bois laid the issue to rest once and for all in his autobiography:

I have frequently been accused of being a Frenchman living in America. I do not deny the allegation. It may be that I have grown up enough to prefer life to the child's fairy tale by which one escapes from it. Things should be acceptable, tangible. I am terribly bored by lies told in righteous hypocrisy for the good of the people, by the devices of a civilization which complacently refuses to accept itself, by happy endings and characterless glamour girls and all the other fictions invented for the solace of escapist.¹⁷

His remark with its note of exasperation and impatience cannot, however, be taken at face value. Pène du Bois, like so many American intellectuals and artists between the two world wars, was simultaneously conscious of his cultural ties to Europe and of his American origin. These were people who found it easier, more stimulating, to live abroad; people to whom the thought of isolationism—cultural, intellectual, political, economic—was an anathema.

Guy Pène du Bois' art as well as his life reflects the internationalism of the period. The figures in his paintings are not so much American or French as they are international. He created, as one critic observed, "a thoroughly commonplace person of the kind that can be seen in gray masses in New York or Paris—varied according to nationality."¹⁸ It is precisely this characteristic, evident in his American works before and after his stay in France, that makes his art such a revealing metaphor of the era. Few artists, on either side of the Atlantic managed to capture and penetrate the sophisticated sleekness, the glittering toughness of the fashionable world. Pène du Bois' powerfully painted forms and perceptive writings together provide an extraordinary document of a vital and lively period in the history of American art and thought.

Footnotes

INTRODUCTION

- 1 John Ireland Howe Baur, *Revolution and Tradition in Modern American Art* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1958), p. 87.
- 2 Edgar Preston Richardson, *Painting in America, from 1502 to the Present* (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell, 1965), p. 366.
- 3 *Ibid.*, p. 267.
- 4 Sheldon Cheney, *A Primer of Modern Art* (New York: Liveright, 1935), pp. 242-43.
- 5 Henry Geldzahler, *American Painting in the Twentieth Century* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1965), p. 105.
- 6 Milton Brown, *American Painting from the Armory Show to the Depression* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1972), p. 170.

EARLY YEARS

- 1 I have relied on several main sources for information concerning Guy Pène du Bois' life. His autobiography, *Artists Say the Silliest Things* (hereafter abbreviated ASTST) appeared in 1940 (New York: American Artists Group) and is fundamental. His papers have been micro-filmed by the Archives of American Art. His diary, which he kept intermittently beginning in 1913 through 1955, is another valuable source. Finally, his daughter, Yvonne Pène du Bois McKenney, an artist herself, has generously shared her copious memories of her father.
- 2 Harry Salpeter, "High Life in the Garret," *Esquire* VI no. 5 (November 1936): 123.
- 3 Henri Pène du Bois (1859-1906), was a music and art critic for the *New York American*. He translated the works of some of the finest French authors. The newspaper sent him abroad to study the salons of Europe and he was returning from his second trip for the paper when he died. His works included a translation of Prosper Mérimée, *Letters to An Unknown* (NY: Brentano's, 1907). And he wrote a regular column for the *New York American*, titled "Art Notes of the Studios, Shops, and Galleries."
- 4 Salpeter, p. 123.
- 5 See *The Library and Art Collection of Henry [sic] Pène du Bois of New York* (New York: George A. Leavitt, 1887). Charles Sotheran contributed a "Proem" to this volume that is a valuable source of information on Henri Pène du Bois. The auction, which took place in June 1887, lasted eight days and netted over \$17,000. The catalogue comprised 498 pages and listed 2496 lots, and was divided into ten sections: 1. art; 2. vellum manuscripts; 3. original autographs; 4. early typography; 5.

bibliography; 6. curiosa and facetiae; 7. poetry and drama; 8. varia literaria; 9. prints and aquarelles; and 10. curia and library furniture.

- 6 ASTST, p. 15.
- 7 *Ibid.*, p. 53.
- 8 *Ibid.*, p. 1.
- 9 *Ibid.*, p. 55.
- 10 *Ibid.*, p. 56.
- 11 *Ibid.*, p. 48.
- 12 *Ibid.*, p. 62.
- 13 *Ibid.*, p. 71.

ART SCHOOL

- 1 ASTST, p. 79.
- 2 *Ibid.*, p. 71.
- 3 "Du Bois Tells How He Met Real Life," *Life* 26 no. 25 (June 1949): 66.
- 4 ASTST, p. 73.
- 5 *Ibid.*, p. 84.
- 6 *Ibid.*, p. 85.
- 7 "Du Bois Tells How He Met Real Life," p. 66.
- 8 ASTST, p. 85.
- 9 Guy Pène du Bois, "Chase, in All His Moods, Shown at New Vose Galleries," *New York American*, 27 December 1909.
- 10 Guy Pène du Bois, "Art By the Way," *International Studio*, 76, no. 310 (March 1923): 547.
- 11 ASTST, p. 85.
- 12 *Idem.*
- 13 See "Carroll Beckwith [obituary]," *Arts and Decoration* 8 (November 1917): 44.
- 14 His students at the ASL where he taught for 59 years included John Marin, Eugene Speicher, Norman Rockwell, Georgia O'Keeffe, Ogden Pleissner, and Louis Bouché. See "Who's Who in American Art," *Arts and Decoration*, 8/6, no. 11 (September 1916): 517.

ROBERT HENRI

- 1 ASTST, p. 90.
- 2 Jerome Mellquist, *The Emergence of an American Art* (Port Washington, New York: Kennikat Press, 1969, reprint of 1942 edition), p. 124.
- 3 ASTST, p. 86.
- 4 *Idem.*
- 5 *Ibid.*, p. 84.
- 6 *Idem.*
- 7 *Ibid.*, p. 83.
- 8 *Ibid.*, p. 88.
- 9 Guy Pène du Bois (hereafter abbreviated GPDB) Diary, 30 November 1918.
- 10 Robert Henri, *The Art Spirit*; compiled by Margery Ryerson, new issue and introduction by Forbes Watson (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott, 1939), p. 6.
- 11 *Ibid.*, p. 201.
- 12 William Yarrow and Louis Bouché, eds., *Robert Henri, His Life and Work* (New York: Boni & Liveright, 1921), p. 28.
- 13 ASTST, p. 89.

- 14 Guy Pène du Bois, "Robert Henri—Realist and Idealist," *Arts and Decoration* 2, no. 6 (April 1912): 230.
- 15 Forbes Watson, "The Art Spirit by Robert Henri [book review]," *The Arts* 4, no. 5 (November 1923): 296.
- 16 ASTST, p. 81.
- 17 "Exhibitions: Robert Henri," *The Arts* 17, no. 7 (April 1931): 497.
- 18 See *American Art News*, 17 December 1904, p. 2. The school was to open June 14 at Arrochar Park. I am grateful to Susan Hobbs for discovering this information and sharing it with me.
- 19 ASTST, p. 161.
- 20 Guy Pène du Bois, "William Glackens, Normal Man, the Best Eyes in American Art," *Arts and Decoration* 4, no. 11 (September 1914): 404.
- 21 ASTST, p. 155.
- 22 Guy Pène du Bois, "The Spirit and the Chronology of the Modern Movement," *Arts and Decoration* 3, no. 5 (March 1913): 151. Special Armory Show number.
- 23 See Guy Pène du Bois, "Greatest Exhibit of Rodin's Art, T. F. Ryan's Gift to Museum," *New York American*, 6 May 1912.
- 24 John Baker, "Guy Pène du Bois on Realism," *Archives of American Art Journal* 17, no. 2 (1977): 5. From an unpublished manuscript by Guy Pène du Bois, "Apes and Angels in Art," written c. 1941-1945. Drafts of this manuscript are in the artist's papers at the Archives of American Art.
- 25 Guy Pène du Bois, "The Carnegie International," *American Magazine of Art* 39, no. 11 (November 1936): 721-22.
- 26 GPDB Diary, 2 December 1925.
- 27 "Guy Pène du Bois by Guy Pène du Bois," *International Studio* 75, no. 301 (June 1922): 244.

FIRST TRIP ABROAD

- 1 ASTST, p. 93.
- 2 *Idem.*
- 3 *Ibid.*, p. 94.
- 4 *Ibid.*, p. 95.
- 5 *Ibid.*, p. 97.
- 6 *Ibid.*, p. 95.
- 7 *Idem.*
- 8 *Ibid.*, p. 96.
- 9 *Ibid.*, p. 97.
- 10 *Idem.*
- 11 *Ibid.*, p. 110.
- 12 *Idem.*
- 13 *Ibid.*, p. 113.
- 14 *Idem.*
- 15 *Ibid.*, p. 115.
- 16 *New York American* for which Henri Pène du Bois had been a music and art critic for more than ten years, wrote a long obituary, "Death Claims Two Newspaper Men [Henri Pène du Bois & Henry E. McNichol]," *NY American*, 21 July 1906. "Mr. Du Bois was regarded in the art world as one of the fairest of critics. He was known to nearly every modern painter of any note. He

possessed the rare gift of an analytical mind. His knowledge of the truly beautiful in art and the universal knowledge in the art world that a Du Bois criticism was an honest one gave his writings on art subjects a world wide value. . . . His gentleness of character was known to thousands and one of his chief characteristics was a dislike to write unpleasant things. It was his aim to find something to praise, if he could, whether he was writing about a picture or a person. He possessed an original style of expressing his thoughts which was especially charming. . . . Of music, as of art, Mr. Du Bois was a rare judge." Another obituary appeared in the *New York Times*, Henri Pène du Bois, 21 July 1906. Chase had regarded Henri Pène du Bois as "a fine writer, a great writer," (ASTST, p. 73).

NEW YORK AMERICAN

- 1 Richard Carl Medford, *Guy Pène du Bois*. Exhibition catalogue (Hagerstown, Maryland: Washington County Museum of Fine Arts, 1940), pp. 10-11.
- 2 ASTST, p. 123.
- 3 GPDB Diary, 9 February 1915.
- 4 ASTST, p. 123.
- 5 *Ibid.*, p. 124.
- 6 *Ibid.*, pp. 140-41.
- 7 *Ibid.*, p. 125.
- 8 *Ibid.*, p. 126.
- 9 *Ibid.*, p. 101.
- 10 *Ibid.*, pp. 132-33.
- 11 *Ibid.*, p. 128.
- 12 *Ibid.*, p. 147. Those he saw included Julius Golz, Homer Boss, Glenn O. Coleman, Arnold Friedman, Harry Daugherty and Roy Williams.
- 13 *Ibid.*, p. 129.
- 14 *Ibid.*, pp. 150-51.

ARMORY SHOW

- 1 For the best published accounts of the Armory Show, see Milton Brown, *The Story of the Armory Show* (New York: Joseph Hirshhorn Foundation, 1963) and 1913 *Armory Show 50th Anniversary Exhibition*, exhibition catalogue (Utica, New York: Munson Williams Proctor Institute, 17 February-31 March 1963).
- 2 ASTST, pp. 173-74.
- 3 Although all the articles were signed by others, several, including those by Davies and Glackens, were ghost written by Pène du Bois after interviews with the authors, see: ASTST, p. 173, and Brown, *Story of the Armory Show*, p. 92. The latter says Guy Pène du Bois paraphrased Davies' explanation.
- 4 Guy Pène du Bois, "The Spirit and the Chronology of the Modern Movement," *Arts and Decoration* special exhibition number (March 1913): 178.
- 5 ASTST, pp. 165-67.
- 6 *Ibid.*, p. 170.
- 7 Only *Interior*, *Cascade*, *Bois de Boulogne*, and *The Politician* were included when the show traveled to Chicago. No works by Guy Pène du Bois were included when the

show traveled on to Boston.

- 8 Jerome Myers, *Artist in Manhattan* (New York: American Artists Group, 1940), p. 38.
- 9 Quoted in Brown, *Story of the Armory Show*, p. 201. Letter, GPDB to Jerome Myers, undated, Myers Papers, Delaware Art Museum, as quoted in Grant Holcomb III, *The Life and Art of Jerome Myers*, M.A. Thesis, University of Delaware, 1971, p. 39.
- 10 Guy Pène du Bois, "Exhibitions at the Galleries: Painters and Sculptors Squabble," *Arts and Decoration* 4, no. 9 (July 1914): 354-55.
- 11 Guy Pène du Bois, "Who's Who in American Art [Arthur B. Davies]," *Arts and Decoration* 5, no. 2 (December 1914): 65.
- 12 ASTST, p. 174.
- 13 Guy Pène du Bois, "Art at Home and Abroad," *Vanity Fair* 1, no. 1 (September 1913): 48.
- 14 Guy Pène du Bois, "Jerome Myers," *Art and Progress* 5, no. 3 (January 1914): 89.
- 15 Illustrated, Royal Cortissoz, *Guy Pène du Bois* (New York: Whitney Museum of American Art, 1931, American Artists Series): p. [39].
- 16 Guy Pène du Bois in *Juliana Force and American Art, A Memorial Exhibition*, exhibition catalogue (New York: Whitney Museum of American Art, 24 September-30 October 1949): 43.
- 17 Guy Pène du Bois, "John Francis Kraushaar," *Arts Weekly* 1, no. 9 (7 May 1932): 201.

WHITNEY STUDIO CLUB

- 1 Jerome Myers, "Confidences of an Errant Artist," *Arts and Decoration* 7, no. 8 (June 1917): 419.
- 2 Long overshadowed by her colleague, Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney, her significant contributions to the course of American art are becoming increasingly revealed through the researches of Avis Berman. See *Juliana Force and American Art, A Memorial Exhibition* catalogue (New York: Whitney Museum of American Art, 24 September-30 October 1949). Guy Pène du Bois was one of the contributors to the catalogue.
- 3 "Mrs. Whitney Replaces Club With Galleries," *New York Herald*, 7 December 1928. See Whitney Museum Papers (hereafter abbreviated NWh), Archives of American Art (hereafter abbreviated AAA) (NWh-5: 369). Charter members of the Whitney Studio Club included: Paul Manship, George Bellows, Allen Tucker, Guy Pène du Bois, Jo Davidson, John Sloan, William Glackens, Robert Henri, Eugene Speicher, Nan Watson, Hayley Lever, Andrew O'Connor, Mahonri Young, Blenden Campbell, Randall Davey, Stuart Davis. Other members on the early rolls were Elie Nadelman, Glenn O. Coleman, Paul Dougherty, C. Carey Rumsey, Hopper, Halpert, F. Luis Mora, Max Kuehne, and William Zorach.
- 4 Hermon More and Lloyd Goodrich, in *Juliana Force and American Art*, p. 55.
- 5 Forbes Watson, "The Star-Spangled Banner," *The Arts* 17, no. 1 (October 1931): 52.
- 6 ASTST, p. 189.

7 Participants included: Gifford Beal, William Glackens, Robert Winthrop Chanler, Paul Dougherty, Walt Kuhn, Stuart Davis, Eugene Higgins, Mahonri Young, F. Luis Mora, John Sloan, and Guy Pène du Bois. Robert Henri and George Bellows declined to participate, and Leon Kroll, along with several others, did not finish. See: B. H. Friedman, *Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney*, with the research collaboration of Flora Miller Irving (Garden City, New York: Doubleday, 1978). Friedman says twenty may have been invited (p. 20).

- 8 Friedman, *Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney*, p. 400.
- 9 Guy Pène du Bois recalled (ASTST, p. 190): "The resulting signature was Russian, and the painting, to any casual observer, exceedingly modern." The signature was recorded in Friedman, *Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney*, p. 401. He indicated that it was formed from the first two letters of Kuhn, Dougherty, du Bois, Sloan, Mora, Davis, Chanler, Beal, Young, Glackens, Higgins.
- 10 ASTST, p. 190.
- 11 "Mrs. Whitney's New Idea," *American Art News* 16, no. 18 (9 February 1918): 6.
- 12 *Idem*.
- 13 James Britton, "Paint Orgy a la Whitney," *American Art News* 16, no. 19 (16 February 1918): 2.
- 14 *Idem*.
- 15 Guy Pène du Bois, "At the Art Galleries," *New York Evening Post Magazine*, 9 February 1918.
- 16 Lloyd Goodrich, "Exhibitions in New York," *The Arts* 15, no. 5 (May 1929): 325.
- 17 GPDB Diary, 10 October 1918.
- 18 "Art Notes," *Touchstone* 4, no. 4 (January 1919): 350.
- 19 Those having their first one man shows included Sloan, Glackens, Pène du Bois, Tucker, Sheeler, Hopper, Coleman, Miller, Dasburg, Stuart Davis, Stella, Bluemner, Boardman Robinson, Schnackenberg, Marsh, Katherine Schmidt, Mattson, Carl Waters, Nakian, John B. Flanagan, Charles Howard, Ernest Fiene, Emil Ganso, John Steuart Curry, Joseph Pollet, Leon Hartl, and Molly Luce.
- 20 See Whitney Museum Papers, AAA, including "Announcement, the Whitney Studio Club 1914-1928," AAA, NWh-5: 368.
- 21 GPDB Diary, 9 October 1919.
- 22 GPDB Diary, 15 July 1921.
- 23 "Pity the Poor Artist," *American Art News* 16, no. 30 (4 May 1918): 4. Jo Davison chaired this group, Eliot Norton served as counselor, and other members comprised Paul Dougherty, Robert Winthrop Chanler, Austin Crise, Paul Manship, William Glackens, John Sloan and Guy Pène du Bois.
- 24 See Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney, "The End of America's Apprenticeship in Art," *Arts and Decoration* 13, no. 2 (25 June 1920): 83, 124; "American Influence on Foreign Sculpture," 13, no. 3 (August 1920): 150-51; "American Influence on Foreign Painting," 13, no. 4 (September 1920): 230-31, 284, 286; "American Music and Musicians," 13, no. 5 (October 1920): 307, 438,

350; "Drama and Democracy," 14, no. 1 (November 1920): 13, 68.

- 25 Whitney, "The End of America's Apprenticeship in Art: Painting," p. 230.
- 26 *Arts and Decoration* 7 (February 1917): 176-82, 210.
- 27 *International Studio* 76, no. 308 (January 1923): 351-54.
- 28 See "Whitney Museum to be Opened Today," *New York Times*, 18 November 1931, and *New York Herald Tribune*, 17 November 1931, AAA, NWh-5: 400, 407.
- 29 Guy Pène du Bois, *Juliana Force and American Art*, p. 42.

MODERNISM

- 1 John Ireland Howe Baur, *Revolution and Tradition in Modern American Art* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1958): 6.
- 2 Guy Pène du Bois, "At the Art Galleries," *New York Evening Post Magazine*, 27 April 1918. He was reviewing an exhibition at the Daniel Gallery.
- 3 *Idem*.
- 4 Guy Pène du Bois, "Art and the Decline of the Bourgeoisie," *Magazine of Art* 37, no. 6 (October 1944): 222.
- 5 Guy Pène du Bois, "Who's Who in Modern Art—Cézanne," *New York Evening Post Magazine*, 15 July 1918.
- 6 Guy Pène du Bois, "At the Art Galleries," *New York Evening Post Magazine*, 11 May 1918. In his criticism, Pène du Bois often used the word "individualism," as he does here, to connote the negative quality of egocentrism.
- 7 Guy Pène du Bois, "Art by the Way," *International Studio* 77, no. 312 (May 1923): 180.
- 8 Guy Pène du Bois, "Who's Who in American Art: Alfred Stieglitz," *Arts and Decoration* 5, no. 6 (April 1915): 235.
- 9 Guy Pène du Bois, "Exhibitions at the Galleries: Alfred Stieglitz and His Post Impressionists at the Photo-Secession Gallery," *Arts and Decoration* 4, no. 2 (December 1913): 70.
- 10 See Guy Pène du Bois, "Exhibition by Independent Artists Attract Immense Throngs," *New York American*, 4 April 1910.
- 11 Alfred H. Barr, Jr., *Matisse, His Art and His Public* (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1951): 87, quoting Guy Pène du Bois review of Matisse at 291, *Camera Work*, no. 31 (July 1910): 46-47.
- 12 Guy Pène du Bois, "Otto H. Bacher Collection of Painter-Etchings on Exhibition," *New York American*, 28 February 1910.
- 13 Guy Pène du Bois, "Francisco Goya in America," *Arts and Decoration* 6, no. 7 (May 1916): 323.

1913-1924

- 1 Those mentioned included Abraham Walkowitz, Alfred Stieglitz, Arthur B. Davies, Lizzie Bliss, Harry Watrous, Robert Henri, William Glackens, Mabel Dodge, Kenyon Cox, Robert Winthrop Chanler, Gertrude Vanderbilt

Whitney, Paul Manship, George de Forest Brush, Gutzon Borglum, George Bellows, Juliana Force, Jo Davidson, Guy Pène du Bois, Jerome Myers, Baron de Meyer, Arnold Genthe, James Earle Fraser, Everett Shinn, J. Alden Weir, F. Luis Mora, Paul Dougherty, Charles Hawthorne, George Gray Barnard, Isadora Duncan, Yvette Guilbert, Childe Hassam, Max Weber, Martin Birnbaum, Charles Caffin, Mahonri Young, Harry Kemp, John Quinn, John Sloan, George Luks, Henry Clews, Walt Kuhn, James Gregg, Leon Dabo, Jonas Lie, and Karl Bitter.

- 2 GPDB Diary, 9 August 1916.
- 3 GPDB Diary, 13 January 1920.
- 4 Hamilton Easter Field, "Comment on the Arts," *The Arts* 1, no. 3 (February-March 1921): 36.
- 5 Walter Pach, *Queer Thing, Painting* (New York: Harper, 1938): p. 202.
- 6 ASTST, p. 247.
- 7 Royal Cortissoz, *American Artists* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1932), p. 3.
- 8 See William H. Gerdtz, Jr., *Painting and Sculpture in New Jersey*, vol. 24, the N.J. Historical Series, Princeton, N.J.: D. Van Nostrand, 1964), p. 211.
- 9 "Lloyd Goodrich Reminisces," as recorded in talks with Harlan B. Phillips, 1962-63, p. 2, AAA. Previous residents, occupants of his studio, included Frank Fowler, a decorator who worked on the Waldorf Astoria Hotel; Frederick Dana Mash, Reginal Marsh's father; and an English painter named Clinton Palmer, who had executed decorations for the local Episcopal church. After Guy Pène du Bois left, Michael Lenson lived there. Charles Hawthorne and Albert and Marie Sterner also lived at Nutley at one time. Jerome Myers tried living there for a time, but without success Arthur Hoeber (1854-1915), the painter and critic, was another native of Nutley.
- 10 GPDB Diary, 18 October 1915.
- 11 *Idem*.
- 12 Jerome Myers, *Artist in Manhattan* (New York: American Artists Group, 1940), p. 65.
- 13 George Biddle, *An American Artist's Story* (Boston: Little Brown, 1939), p. 203. Biddle's visitors included Marguerite and William Zorach, Gaston Lachaise, Robert Winthrop Chanler, Rockwell Kent, Louis Bouché, Guy Pène du Bois, Jo Davidson, and Paul Manship.
- 14 GPDB Diary, 27 May 1921.
- 15 See Dorothy W. Phillips, *A Catalogue of the Collection of American Paintings in the Corcoran Gallery of Art, Vol. II, Painters Born from 1850 to 1910*. (Washington, D.C.: Corcoran Gallery of Art, 1973), pp. 119-20; and Lloyd Goodrich, *Yasuo Kuniyoshi* (New York: Whitney Museum of American Art, 1948).
- 16 See Alfred Werner, "Pascin's American Years," *American Art Journal*, 4, no. 1 (Spring 1972): 97.
- 17 Yasuo Kuniyoshi, *Yasuo Kuniyoshi* (New York: American Artists Group, Monographs, #11, 1945), n.p.
- 18 ASTST, pp. 192, 196.
- 19 *Ibid.*, p. 193.
- 20 Guy Pène du Bois, "Art by the Way," *International*

- Studio* 77, no. 311 (April 1923): 78.
- 21 Guy Pène du Bois, "Art by the Way," *International Studio* 77, no. 313 (June 1923): 253.
 - 22 Guy Pène du Bois, "Art by the Way," *International Studio*, April, 1923, p. 78.
 - 23 Guy Pène du Bois, "Among the Art Galleries," *New York Evening Post Magazine*, 15 February 1919.
 - 24 GPDB Diary, 12 April 1919.
 - 25 GPDB Diary, 6 May 1919.
 - 26 For information on GPDB and other artists who lived here, see William Slaughter, *Westport Artists of the Past*, exhibition catalogue Westport, Conn.: Westport Public Library, 12-30 June 1976, and also ASTST, pp. 213-16.
 - 27 Guy Pène du Bois, "Art By the Way," *International Studio* 78, no. 318 (November 1923): 179.
 - 28 GPDB Diary, 27 March 1921.
 - 29 ASTST, p. 215.
 - 30 *Ibid.*, p. 214.
 - 31 GPDB Diary, 2 September 1924.
 - 32 GPDB Diary, 22 May 1921.
 - 33 GPDB Diary, 5 September 1921.
 - 34 One of the few works he finished in Westport was a portrait of Marion Levy. The portrait was later destroyed in a fire that swept the Compo Inn.
 - 35 See Lloyd Goodrich, "The Arts' Magazine: 1920-1931," *American Art Journal* 5, no. 1 (May 1973): 79-85. For more information on Forbes Watson, see his voluminous papers on 11 reels of microfilm at the Archives of American Art.
 - 36 Forbes Watson, "Editorial," *The Arts* 10, no. 2 (August 1926): 65.
 - 37 Letter, GPDB to Forbes Watson, n.d. Forbes Watson Papers, AAA, D-55: 788.
 - 38 ASTST, p. 255.
 - 39 GPDB Diary, 5 October 1913.
 - 40 Royal Cortissoz, "American Work in the Independent Salon," *NY Tribune*, 2 March 1913. Reprinted in Royal Cortissoz, *Art and Common Sense*, NY: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1913, p. 168.
 - 41 GPDB Diary, 11 June 1918.
 - 42 GPDB Diary, 17 September 1913.
 - 43 GPDB Diary, 15 October 1913.
 - 44 Guy Pène du Bois taught at the Art Students League 1920-4, 1930-2, 1935-6. Several other artists began to teach here in this year also, including Frederic W. Goudy, Leo Lentelli, Andrew Dasburg, Henry Rittenberg, and George E. Wolfe. Kenneth Hayes Miller had been teaching here since 1911, and Robert Henri arrived in 1916. See Marchal E. Landgren, "Introduction," Walter Pach, *Years of Art: The Story of the Art Students League of New York* (New York: Robert M. McBride, 1940): 114; and *Hundredth Anniversary Exhibition of Paintings and Sculptures by 100 Artists Associated with the Art Students League of New York*, exhibition catalogue (New York: Kennedy Galleries, 6-29 March 1975).
 - 45 GPDB Diary, 25 November 1920.
 - 46 GPDB Diary, 27 May 1921.
 - 47 GPDB Diary, 2 May 1924.
 - 48 Alexander Calder, *Calder, An Autobiography With Pictures* (New York: Pantheon, 1966), p. 66.
 - 49 Joan M. Marter, "Alexander Calder at the Art Students League," *American Art Review* 4, no. 5 (May 1978): 55.
 - 50 Letter, Jack Tworikov to Betsy Fahlman, 28 July 1978.
 - 51 Carl Zigrosser, *The Artist in America: Twenty-Four Close Ups of Contemporary Printmakers* (New York: Alfred Knopf, 1942), p. 59.
 - 52 Lloyd Goodrich, *Raphael Soyer*, exhibition catalogue (New York: Whitney Museum of American Art, 25 October-3 December 1967); 7. Soyer studied with Pène du Bois at the League December, 1920, January, 1921; and January-March, 1923.
 - 53 Raphael Soyer, "The Lesson: The Academy, the League, and the Classroom," *Arts Magazine* 42, no. 1 (September-October 1967): 35-36. An almost identical version of this account appears in Raphael Soyer, *Diary of an Artist* (Washington, D.C.: New Republic Books, 1977): 212-13.
 - 54 Soyer, *Diary of an Artist*, p. 290.
 - 55 *Ibid.*, p. 213. An almost identical version of this account appears in Soyer, "The Lesson," p. 36. Another account of this may be found in Raphael Soyer, *Homage to Thomas Eakins, Etc.*, ed. by Rebecca L. Soyer (New York: South Brunswick, 1966), p. 170.
 - 56 Soyer, *Homage to Thomas Eakins*, p. 170. Soyer also records this in *Diary of an Artist*, p. 156.
 - 57 Soyer, *Diary of an Artist*, p. 215. An almost identical version of this account appears in Soyer, "The Lesson," p. 36.

SECOND TRIP TO FRANCE

- 1 These did not materialize, however. He recalled: "I wrote at the most in that time three short pieces, two of them on art" (ASTST, p. 249). One was on Demetrius Galanis, his old friend, and the other on Andrew O'Connor, a sculptor and friend of Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney.
- 2 ASTST, p. 219.
- 3 *Ibid.*, p. 231.
- 4 Yvonne Pène du Bois McKenney, unpublished biography of GPDB, c. 1963.
- 5 GPDB Diary, 26 July 1925.
- 6 ASTST, p. 249.
- 7 *Idem.*
- 8 *Ibid.*, p. 236.
- 9 GPDB Diary, 16 June 1926.
- 10 Salpeter, *Esquire*, p. 233, claims that Kraushaar advanced him \$30,000 over the time he was in France.
- 11 GPDB Diary, 4 August 1928.
- 12 GPDB Diary, 8 March 1926.

1930s

- 1 ASTST, p. 254.
- 2 Letter, Royal Cortissoz to GPDB, 16 April 1930, AAA, GPDB Papers, 28:4.
- 3 Letter, GPDB to Royal Cortissoz, 3 August 1930, Collection of American Literature, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University.
- 4 GPDB Diary, 20 February 1928.
- 5 Numbers 20-38 W. 10th St. were in an Italianate style. Called the "English Terrace" (1855-6), they have been attributed to James Renwick, Jr. Notable residents on this street, in addition to Guy Pène du Bois, have included

Edward L. Godkin, a reformer and the founder of *The Nation*; the sculptor Frederick MacMonnies, and Marcel Duchamp (no. 28). See Edmund T. Delaney and Charles Lockwood, *Greenwich Village, A Photographic Guide* (New York: Dover, 1976); p. 23.

- 6 Louis Bouché (1896-1969) belonged to a younger generation than Guy Pène du Bois. He possessed a humor and style of expression very different from Pène du Bois, who rarely wrote about him in his criticisms. See Guy Pène du Bois, "Current Exhibitions: Louis Bouché," *Arts Weekly* 1, no. 4 (2 April 1932): 73. Bouché knew Pène du Bois from the time he had dated Floy's daughter, Virginia, before he met Marian Wright, whom he married in 1920. Later his daughter, Jane Michelle, married Pène du Bois' son, William, in 1943. Bouché also had contact with Pène du Bois through the Whitney Studio Club and the Penguin Club, and visited Pène du Bois during the summer at Norwalk, Connecticut. See Guy Pène du Bois, "Introduction," *Exhibition of Paintings by Louis Bouché* (New York: Kraushaar, 16-28 March 1936).
- 7 See "Guy Pène du Bois School of Art, Stonington, Connecticut, Summer Season 1940, July 1-October 1," AAA, GPDB Papers 28: 1016-1027. Mornings were spent in Life Class or Portrait Class; afternoons, in Composition Class, Landscape, and Still Life. The rates were boarding, \$150/month or \$40/week, and day students, \$40/month and \$12/week.
- 8 "With du Bois," *Art Digest* 15, no. 17 (June 1941): 36.
- 9 Hilton Leech eventually established a school in Sarasota, Florida. See *Paintings by Hilton Leech*, exhibition catalogue (Sarasota Art Association, 21 February-5 March 1954); *Hilton Leech Watercolors*, exhibition catalogue (Memphis, Tennessee: Brooks Memorial Art Gallery, 25 October-18 November 1965); Letter, Mrs. Elden Rowland to Betsy Fahlman, 28 February 1980; and George Albert Perret, "Introduction," *Guy Pène du Bois, 1884-1958*, exhibition catalogue (Southampton, New York: Parrish Art Museum, 10 July-2 August, 1964): n.p. The school on Amagansett was well enough known to receive the following notice: "The Amagansett group whose mentor is Hilton Leech is holding an exhibition of oils and watercolors at the Morton Galleries" (Howard Devree, "A Reviewer's Notebook: Drawings," *New York Times*, 20 February 1938).
- 10 See "That Damned Rose Madder Bunch," AAA, GPDB Papers 28: 947.
- 11 Letter, Alice Butler to Betsy Fahlman, 10 July 1975.
- 12 George Albert Perret, *Guy Pène du Bois, 1884-1958*, exhibition catalogue (Southampton, New York: Parrish Art Museum, 10 July-2 August 1964): n.p.

MURALS

- 1 See "The Jumble Shop 20th Anniversary," 20 February 1942. AAA, Louis Bouché Papers, D128: 5-8. Patrons included Daniel Chester French, Theodore Dreiser, Martha Graham, William Glackens, Hunt Diederich, Heinrich Van Loon, William Saroyan, Frederick Lewis Allen, Lily Pons, Adolf Dehn, Sherwood Anderson, and Cole

- Porter. Guy Pène du Bois was a regular patron as well.
- 2 Forbes Watson, "Gallery Explorations," *Parnassus* 4, no. 7 (December 1932): 4.
- 3 See Forbes Watson, "The Jumble Shop's First of the Month Exhibition," *Parnassus* 4, no. 7 (December 1937): 4.
- 4 See Edward Alden Jewell, "Visions That Stir the Mural Pulse," *New York Times*, 27 May 1934.
- 5 See letter, Olin Dows (Chief, Treasury Relief Art Department, Washington, D.C.) to GPDB, 17 March 1936. AAA, GPDB Papers, 28: 32-34.
- 6 Illustrated in ASTST, p. 293.
- 7 Letter, Edward B. Rowan (Superintendent, Treasury Department, Section of Painting and Sculpture, Department of Justice) to GPDB, 5 September 1932. AAA, GPDB Papers, 28:36.
- 8 This was reproduced in Jerrold Lanes, "Guy Pène du Bois, Graham," *Artforum* 3 (7 March 1976): 79.
- 9 Letters, Caroline O'Day (Representative to Congress from New York) to GPDB, 11 January 1937, AAA, GPDB Papers, 28: 41; and Maria K. Ealand (Assistant, Section of Painting and Sculpture, Treasury Department Procurement Division) to GPDB, 6 May 1937, AAA, GPDB Papers, 28: 43-44. Local Rye people had suggested the Jay theme to him.

LATER YEARS

- 1 Guy Pène du Bois, "William Glackens," *William Glackens Memorial Exhibition*, exhibition catalogue (New York: Whitney Museum of American Art, 14 December 1938-15 January 1939): 5.
- 2 For an account of this, see AAA, GPDB Papers, 28: 202-09.
- 3 Letter, GPDB to Duncan family, 5 June 1951, AAA, GPDB Papers, 28: 356.
- 4 Letter, GPDB to William Pène du Bois, 29 May 1951, AAA, GPDB Papers, 28: 355.
- 5 *Idem*.
- 6 Letter, GPDB to Forbes Watson, n.d., AAA, Forbes Watson Papers, D-55: 780-81.
- 7 Letter, GPDB to Lloyd, 30 January 1946, AAA, GPDB Papers, 28: 191.
- 8 Letter, GPDB to Clay Bartlett, 1 October 1949, AAA, GPDB Papers, 28: 229.
- 9 Letter, GPDB to Jane and William Pène du Bois, 31 January 1953, AAA, GPDB Papers, 28: 541.
- 10 Letter, GPDB to William Pène du Bois, 24 March 1952, AAA, GPDB Papers, 28: 439.
- 11 See Henry Varnum Poor, "How This Group Began," *Reality: A Journal of Artists' Opinions* 1, no. 1 (Spring 1953): 6.
- 12 Letter, GPDB to Rico Le Brun, 18 August 1952, AAA, GPDB Papers, 28: 475.
- 13 "Statement," *Reality: A Journal of Artists' Opinions* 1, no. 1 (Spring 1953): 1. The following artists signed the statement (they claimed "one of the last acts of John Sloan before his death was to join the Group"): Milton Avery, Isabel Bishop, Aaron Bohrod, Louis Bosa, Louis Bouché, Charles Burchfield, Nicolai Cikovsky, Gladys Rockmore Davis, Joseph De Martini, Alexander Dobkin, Guy Pène du Bois, Philip Evergood, Ernest Fiene, Joseph Floch, Xavier Gonzalez, Dorothea Greenbaum, Ste-

- phen Greene, William Gropper, Chaim Gross, Maurice Grosser, Robert Gwathmey, Joseph Hirsch, Edward Hopper, Karl Knaths, Leon Kroll, Yasuo Kuniyoshi, Joe Lasker, Sidney Laufman, Jacob Lawrence, Jack Levine, Oronzio Maldarelli, Reginald Marsh, Henry Mattson, Edward Melcarth, Paul Mommer, Sigmund Menkes, Henry Varnum Poor, Anton Refregier, Honore Sharrer, Joseph Solman, Moses Soyer, Raphael Soyer, William Thon, Anthony Toney, Howard Warshaw, Sol Wilson, and Karl Zerbe.
- 14 Three issues appeared, 1, no. 1, Spring, 1953; no. 2 Spring, 1954; and no. 3, Spring, 1955. Sam Golden of the American Artists Group provided assistance on the last two issues.
 - 15 In 1944, he listed on consignment to Kraushaar a work he titled "Apologies to Giorgione." It may have had a similar theme to this one. See AAA, GPDB Papers, 28: 942.
 - 16 See letter, GPDB to Lea and Lincoln Isham, 16 February 1953, AAA, GPDB Papers, 28: 545.
 - 17 *Idem*.

GUY PENE DU BOIS AND HIS TIMES

- 1 ASTST, p. 1963.
- 2 GPDB Diary, 8 September 1913.
- 3 GPDB Diary, 20 September 1913.
- 4 GPDB Diary, 26 March 1926.
- 5 GPDB Diary, 8 September 1913.
- 6 ASTST, p. 81.
- 7 *Ibid.*, p. 186.
- 8 GPDB Diary, 11 January 1919.
- 9 GPDB Diary, 23 August 1936.
- 10 ASTST, p. 129.
- 11 *Ibid.*, p. 131.
- 12 See William B. McCormick, "Guy Pène du Bois—Social Historian, the Similarity of the Spirit Animating the Paintings of du Bois and Daumier," *Arts and Decoration* 4, no. 1 (November 1913): 13-16.
- 13 Guy Pène du Bois, "Art by the Way," *International Studio* 76, no. 305 (October 1922): 88.
- 14 ASTST, p. 131.
- 15 Richard Carl Medford, *Guy Pène du Bois*, exhibition catalogue (Hagerstown, Maryland: Washington County Museum of Fine Arts, 1940): 11.
- 16 See Guy Pène du Bois, "Jean Louis Forain," *The Arts* 3, no. 4 (April 1923): 262-67.
- 17 ASTST, p. 198.
- 18 "Human Frailties," *New York Times*, 8 November 1925.

Chronology

1884

January 4, born, Brooklyn, New York.

1898

Moves to Staten Island.

1899

Enrolls in New York School of Art.

1902

Robert Henri starts teaching at New York School of Art; Pène du Bois serves as monitor of class. Sells first work, a portrait of a Staten Islander.

1905

April, travels to Europe with father. Spends 2-3 weeks in London before settling in Paris. Studies at Academy Colarossi, and with Steinlen. Exhibits for first time at Paris Salon.

1906

May, father takes sick in Gibraltar; July, sails for New York; father dies at sea. July 21, arrives New York City. August, begins work as reporter for *New York American*. Gets studio on West 23rd St.

1908

December, first art criticism appears in *New York American*.

1909

Becomes full-time art critic for *New York American*; there until May, 1912.

1911

April 10, marries Florence ("Floy") Sherman Duncan on Staten Island. December, first article appears in *Arts and Decoration*.

1912

Becomes member of Association of American Painters and Sculptors (AAPS).

1913

Serves on publicity committee for Armory Show. Resigns from AAPS. July 3, daughter, Yvonne, born. Kraushaar begins to handle his work. Mother dies. Serves, until 1914, as assistant to Royal Cortissoz on *New York Tribune*. Begins to edit *Arts and Decoration*.

1914

April, moves to Nutley, New Jersey.

1916

May 9, son, William, born. Loses job at *Arts and Decoration*. Begins to work as art critic for *New York Post*; there until 1918.

1917

Moves back to New York City. First Whitney Studio show. Edits *Arts and Decoration*.

1918

Helps organize American Artists Mutual Aid Society to help artists hurt by war. Charter member, Whitney Studio Club. Has first one-man exhibition anywhere at Whitney Studio Club.

1920

Arranges first one-man show of Edward Hopper at Whitney Studio Club. Moves to Westport, Connecticut. Begins to teach at Art Students League; there until 1921.

1921

Leaves *Arts and Decoration* for good. Juror for 8th Exhibition of Oil Paintings by Contemporary American Artists, Corcoran Gallery of Art.

1922

Writes "Art by the Way" for *International Studio*.

1923

Opens class in painting and drawing at studio in New York.

1924

Sells house in Westport; moves to France in December.

1925

Wins 3rd prize at First Pan-American Exhibition of Oil Paintings, Los Angeles County Museum, for *Shops*.

1929

In U.S. between March and October. Member, American Jury of Selection, International Exhibition of Painting, Carnegie Institute.

1930

April, returns to New York City. Wins *Arts'* All American Nineteen Contest. Wins Norman Wait Harris Prize, Art Institute of Chicago, 43rd Annual Exhibit of American Painting and Sculpture, for *Valley of the Chevreuse*. Juror, 12th Exhibition of Contemporary American Oil Painting, Corcoran Gallery of Art. Teaches at Art Students League until 1932.

1931

November, serves on jury at Art Institute of Chicago.

1932

January, begins Guy Pène du Bois School. Made an Associate of *Arts Weekly*.

1935

Teaches at Art Students League.

1936

Wins Second Altman Prize, National Academy of Design, 11th Annual Exhibition, for *Carnival Interlude*. Juror, 34th International Carnegie Institute.

1937

Wins Second William A. Clark Prize, and Corcoran Silver Medal, 15th Biennial Exhibition of Contemporary American Oil Paintings, Corcoran Gallery of Art, for *Meditation*. Elected Associate of National Academy of Design.

1938

Joins faculty of Amagansett Art School, Long Island, run by Hilton Leech.

1939

Member, Painters' Jury of Selection, 134th Annual Exhibition of Painting and Sculpture, Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts. Becomes instructor at Cooper Union School of Art.

1940

Artists Say the Silliest Things, published by American Artists Group. Jury of Selection, National Academy of Design, 114th Annual Exhibition. Elected a Life Member of Lotos Club. Elected full Academician, National Academy of Design. Suffers heart attack at his summer school in Stonington, Connecticut.

1941

Suffers another heart attack. Juror, 17th Biennial Exhibition of Contemporary American Oil Paintings, Corcoran Gallery of Art. Elected to the Department of Art, National Institute of Arts and Letters.

1942

Jury of Selection, 116th Annual Exhibition of Contemporary American Painting and Sculpture, National Academy of Design; wins Maynard Prize for *Old Trouper*. Appointed member of advisory council of Cooper Union; serves until 1944.

1944

Elected member of Board of Audubon Artists.

1945

Juror, 35th Annual Exhibition of Associated Artists of Pittsburgh. Wins First Altman Prize, National Academy of Design, for *Cocktails*.

1946

Wins prize at Salmagundi Club's Second Annual Exhibition of Paintings, for *After Dinner Speaker*.

1947

May, breaks with Kraushaar.

1949

March, wife has stroke. December, Pène du Bois in hospital with first symptoms of cancer.

1950

Hospitalized. September 28, wife dies.

1951

Becomes involved with Raphael Soyer's efforts on *Reality: A Journal of Artists' Opinions*.

1953

March, he and Yvonne depart for Paris. July, suffers another heart attack.

1956

December, returns to United States.

1958

July 18, dies, Boston, Massachusetts.

Exhibitions

ONE MAN EXHIBITIONS

1918:

November, Whitney Studio Club.

1919:

7-14 August, Newport Art Association, "Paintings by Guy Pène du Bois."

1922:

4-30 April, Kraushaar Galleries, "Paintings by Guy Pène du Bois."

1924:

17 March-2 April, Kraushaar Galleries, "Exhibition of Paintings and Drawings by Guy Pène du Bois."

1925:

3-15 November, Kraushaar Galleries, "Paintings and Drawings by Guy Pène du Bois."

1927:

6-28 December, Kraushaar Galleries, "Exhibition of Paintings by Guy Pène du Bois."

1928:

27 December-27 January 1929, Art Institute of Chicago, "Paintings by Guy Pène du Bois."

1929:

4-16 February, Kraushaar Galleries, "Exhibition of Paintings and Watercolors by Guy Pène du Bois."

1930:

26 February-15 March, Kraushaar Galleries, "Exhibition of Paintings and Watercolors by Guy Pène du Bois."

1932:

29 March-19 April, Kraushaar Galleries, "Paintings and Drawings by Guy Pène du Bois."

1935:

16 January-2 February, Kraushaar Galleries, "Exhibition of Paintings by Guy Pène du Bois."

1936:

11-28 November, Kraushaar Galleries, "Exhibition of Paintings by Guy Pène du Bois."

1938:

15 November-10 December, Kraushaar Galleries, "Paintings by Guy Pène du Bois from 1908 to 1938."

1939:

4-22 January, Carnegie Institute, "An Exhibition of Paintings by Guy Pène du Bois from 1908 to 1938."

18 November-15 December, Corcoran Gallery of Art, "Special Exhibition of Watercolors and Drawings by Guy Pène du Bois."

1940:

1-25 January, Washington County Museum of Fine Arts, Hagerstown, Maryland, "Paintings by Guy Pène du Bois." This show traveled in February to the Mint Museum of Art, Charlotte, North Carolina, and in March to the Museum of Arts and Sciences, Norfolk, Virginia.

1942:

26 January-21 February, Kraushaar Galleries, "Paintings by Guy Pène du Bois."

1943:

24 November-18 December, Kraushaar Galleries, "Paintings by Guy Pène du Bois."

1946:

18 November-7 December, Kraushaar Galleries, "Guy Pène du Bois."

1954:

14 November-14 December, Staten Island Museum, "Guy Pène du Bois."

1963:

19 November-14 December, Graham Gallery, "Guy Pène du Bois 1884-1958, Paintings of Twenty Younger Years, 1913-1933."

1964:

10 July-2 August Parrish Art Museum, Huntington, N.Y., "Guy Pène du Bois 1884-1958."

1966:

25 January-23 February, Marion Art Center, Marion Massachusetts, "Exhibition of Oil Paintings by Guy Pène du Bois."

1970:

6-31 January, Graham Gallery, "Guy Pène du Bois 1884-1958."

1979:

27 March-12 May, Graham Gallery, "Guy Pène du Bois: Painter, Draftsman, and Critic."

GROUP EXHIBITIONS

Throughout his career, Guy Pène du Bois participated in numerous group exhibitions, too numerous to list individually. He was frequently included in the Carnegie International and the Corcoran Biennial, and in annual exhibitions at the Art Institute of Chicago, the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, the St. Louis City Art Museum, the Buffalo Fine Arts Academy and Albright Art Gallery, the Cleveland Museum, the Cincinnati Art Museum, the Detroit Institute of Arts, and the Whitney Museum of American Art. He also often contributed to group shows mounted by Kraushaar Galleries, the Whitney Studio Club, and the New Society of Artists.

COLOR PLATES

CAFE D'HARCOURT, c. 1905-06, oil on canvas board,
12 $\frac{7}{8}$ x 9 $\frac{3}{8}$ inches, Lent by Arthur G. Altschul. [Cat. No. 4.]



MR. AND MRS. CHESTER DALE DINING OUT, 1924,
oil on canvas, 30 x 40 inches, Lent by The Metropolitan
Museum of Art, Gift of Chester Dale, 1963. [Cat. No. 31.]



OPERA BOX, 1926, oil on canvas, 57½ x 45¼ inches,
Lent by Whitney Museum of American Art. [Cat. No. 41.]



AMERICANS IN PARIS, 1927, oil on canvas, $28\frac{3}{4} \times 36\frac{3}{8}$ inches, Lent by The Museum of Modern Art, New York, Given anonymously, 1935. [Cat. No. 46.]



BAL DES QUATRES ARTS, 1929, oil on canvas, 28¾ x 36½ inches, Lent by the David and Alfred Smart Gallery of The University of Chicago, Chicago, IL, Gift of William Benton. [Cat. No. 52.]



NIGHTCLUB, 1933, oil on canvas, 29 $\frac{1}{8}$ x 36 inches, Lent by Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Smithsonian Institution. [Cat. No. 65.]



CARNIVAL INTERLUDE, 1935, oil on canvas, 57 x 44 $\frac{3}{4}$ inches, Lent by Mr. and Mrs. Norman Levy. [Cat. No. 68.]



ABSINTHE HOUSE, NEW ORLEANS, 1946, oil on canvas,
26 x 32 inches, Lent by The Regis Collection, Inc. [Cat. No. 85.]



CATALOGUE OF THE EXHIBITION

All measurements are given in inches and (centimeters),
height preceding width.

works by Guy Pène du Bois

1 COUPLE AT THE TABLE IN PARK.

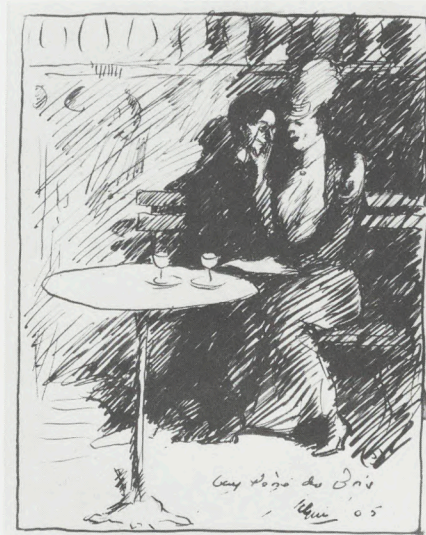
1905

pen and ink on paper

6¼ x 5 (15.8 x 12.7) [sight]

signed, l.r.: Guy Pène du Bois

Lent by Caroline and Sheldon Keck



2 LADY IN BED.

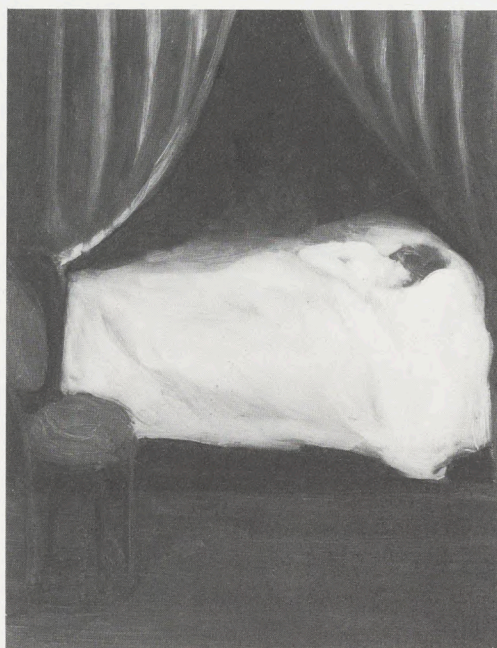
1905

oil on academy board

12½ x 9¼ (31.7 x 23.5)

signed, l.r.: Guy Pène du Bois 1905

Lent by The Pène du Bois Collection



3 LUXEMBOURG GARDENS.

c. 1905

ink wash over charcoal on paper

9 x 9 (22.9 x 22.9)

Lent by The Pène du Bois Collection



4 CAFE D' HARCOURT.

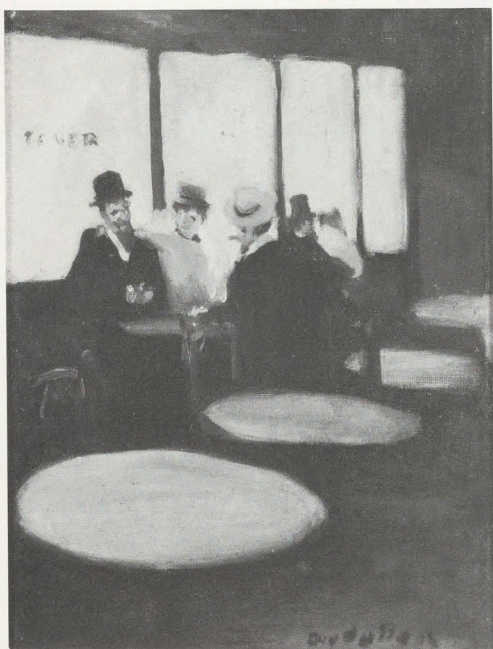
c. 1905-06

oil on canvas board

12 $\frac{7}{8}$ x 9 $\frac{3}{8}$ (32.4 x 23.4)

signed, l.r.: Guy du Bois

Lent by Arthur G. Altschul



5 HENRIETTE'S.

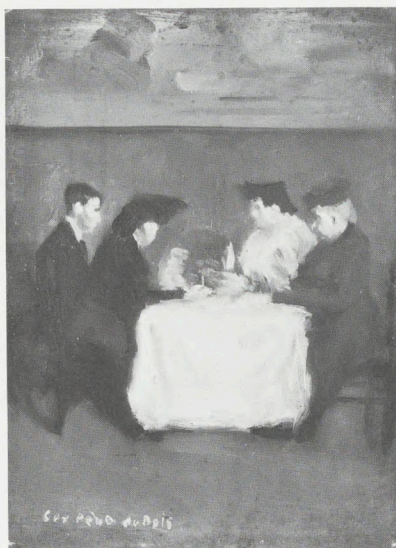
c. 1905-06

oil on academy board

12 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 9 (31.7 x 22.8)

inscribed verso, top: Paris Restaurant 1905-06. The mural was painted by an American girl. Henriette's is the name of the restaurant.

Lent by Grey Art Gallery and Study Center, New York University Art Collection, Gift of Arthur G. Altschul



6 WRESTLERS, STATEN ISLAND.

c. 1906

oil on academy board

12 $\frac{3}{4}$ x 9 (32.4 x 22.9)

Lent by The Pène du Bois Collection



7 CIRCUS TENT.

c. 1906

oil on canvas

18 x 24 (45.7 x 61.0)

Lent by Estate of William Benton, Courtesy The William Benton Museum of Art



8 THE HOUSEWORKERS.

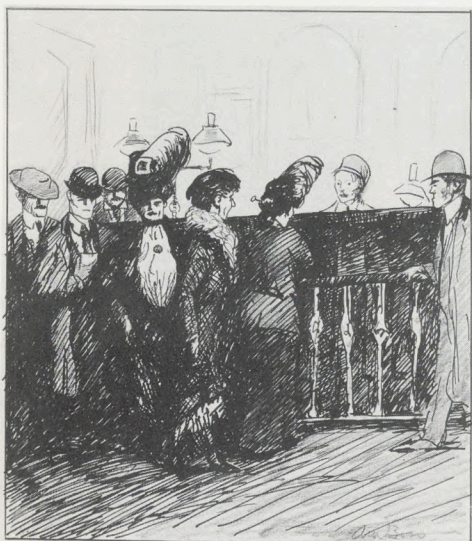
1906

pen and ink and pencil on illustration board

14 x 11 (35.6 x 27.9)

signed, l.r.: du Bois; inscribed, l.c.: The Houseworkers;
verso, u.r.: The Houseworkers/Tenderloin 1906/P.D. 302

Lent by The Pène du Bois Collection



9 AFTER THE MUSIC LESSON.

c. 1907

oil on academy board

12½ x 9½ (31.8 x 24.1)

signed, l.l.: Guy Pène du Bois; inscribed verso: About
1907 or 08 when I was a music critic on the *New York American*.

Lent by Arthur G. Altschul



10 STATEN ISLAND TROLLEY.

c. 1907

oil on canvas

15½ x 23½ (39.4 x 59.7)

inscribed, l.r.: To Uncle George/with love;

signed, l.r.: Guy Pène du Bois

Lent by Museum of Art, The Pennsylvania State University



11 IN THE RESTAURANT.

1913

crayon and pencil on paper

12 3/16 x 14 3/8 (30.9 x 36.5)

signed, u.r.: Guy Pène du Bois 1913

Lent by Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden,
Smithsonian Institution



12 TWENTIETH-CENTURY YOUTH.

1913

oil on academy board

17¼ x 13 7/8 (43.8 x 35.7)

signed l.r.: Guy Pène du Bois 1913

Lent by Albro C. Gaylor



13 THE PIANIST.

c. 1912-14

oil on canvas

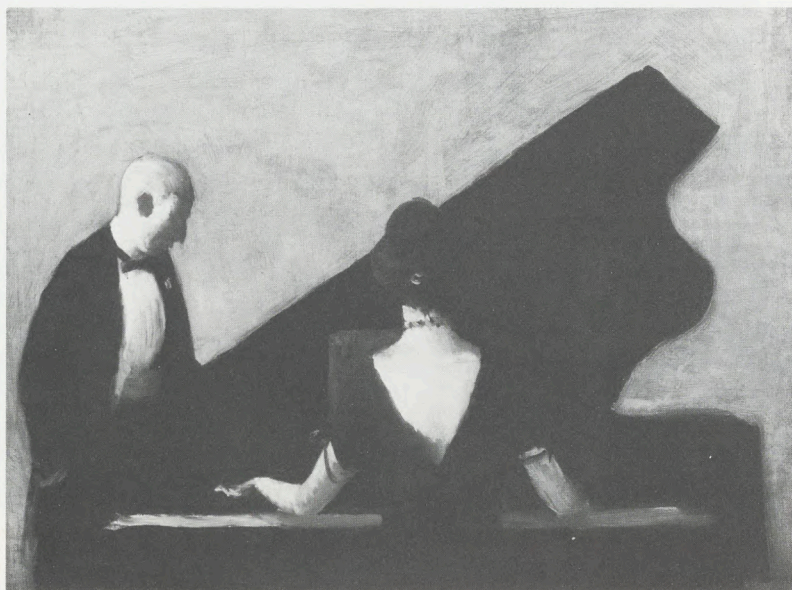
12 x 16 (30.5 x 40.6)

signed, on a piece of canvas glued to backing:

Guy Pène du Bois

Lent by Mr. and Mrs. Meyer Potamkin

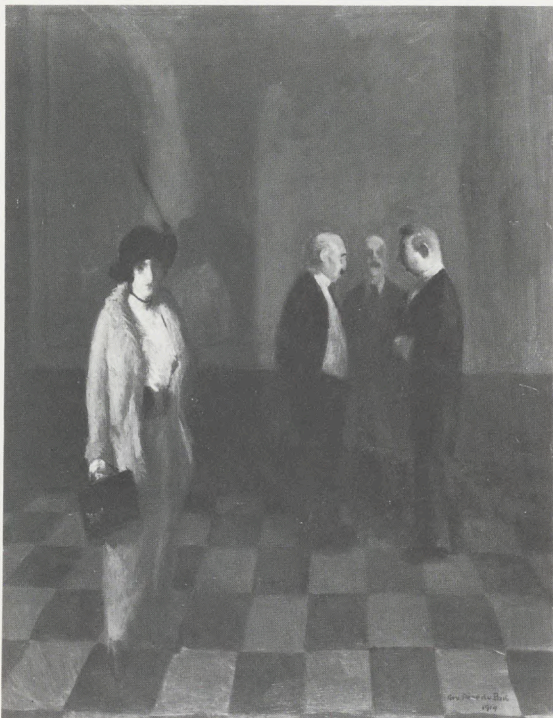
Shown at Corcoran only.



14 THE CORRIDOR.

1914

oil on canvas



28 $\frac{1}{4}$ x 21 $\frac{1}{4}$ (71.7 x 54.0)

signed, l.r.: Guy Pène du Bois/1914

Lent by The Newark Museum

"I also recorded the Tenderloin girls in large plumed hats and bedraggled fineries standing limply or defiantly before the police lieutenant's bar. These pictures, with a few exceptions, were rarely if ever shown. They gave my mother many unhappy moments. She was very far from being a prude but could believe, when off guard, that beauty, by a curious confusion of issues, must pay heed to the proprieties. A canvas of that period, although finished somewhat later, showing two of these girls standing among lawyers or bondsmen in the entrance to the old Jefferson Market Police Court, is now owned by the Newark Museum. Its title, which was far more definite originally, has now been disarmingly changed to *Lobby*. I write this in justification of my mother's qualms." (ASTST, pp. 128-9.) "*The Corridor* was painted from memory of a thing seen at the Jefferson Market Court on the corner of 10th Street and 6th Ave. I think it was beginning then to be called the Woman's Court as it is now. (Pène du Bois quoted in Holger Cahill, "Introduction," *A Museum in Action, Presenting the Museum's Activities, Catalogue of an Exhibition of American Painting and Sculpture from the Museum's Collections*. Newark, N.J.: Newark Museum, 31 October 1944-31 January 1945. #95, p. 104.)

Shown at Corcoran only.

15 JOHN GALSWORTHY SKETCH FOR HARPER'S WEEKLY.

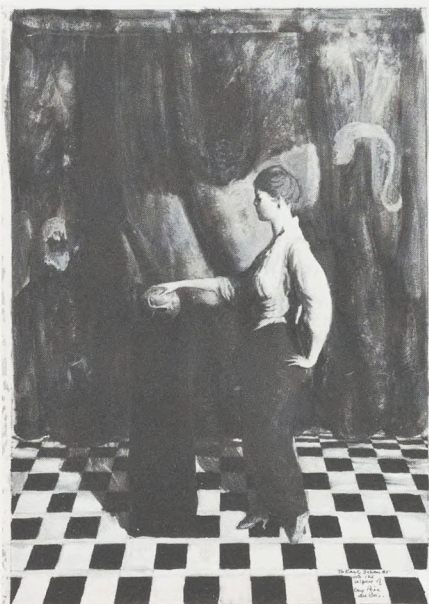
1914

watercolor on paper

19 $\frac{3}{4}$ x 14 $\frac{3}{8}$ (50.1 x 36.5)

inscribed, l.r.: To Karl Schmidt/with the/
respect of/Guy Pène/du Bois

Lent by Dartmouth College Museum and Galleries,
The Karl Schmidt Collection



One of the illustrations for stories by Galsworthy which appeared in *Harper's Weekly* in 1914. This one accompanied "The Latest Thing" (30 May 1914) and bore the caption: "There had never, till quite recently, been a woman like her, so awfully interested in so many things, so likely to be interested in so many more."

16 OPERA CRITICS.

c. 1914

pen and ink with ink wash over pencil on paper

18 $\frac{1}{8}$ x 14 $\frac{1}{4}$ (46.0 x 36.2)

signed, l.r.: Guy Pène du Bois

verso: charcoal sketch of full-length female figure

Lent by The Pène du Bois Collection



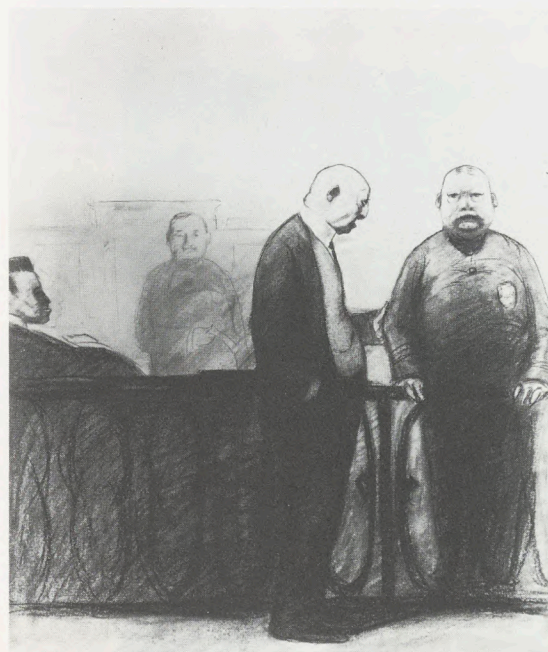
17 THE LAW.

c. 1915

crayon on cardboard

15 $\frac{7}{8}$ x 12 $\frac{3}{4}$ (40.3 x 32.4)

Lent by Whitney Museum of American Art, New York



18 THE RECEPTION/FRENCH COMMISSIONER.

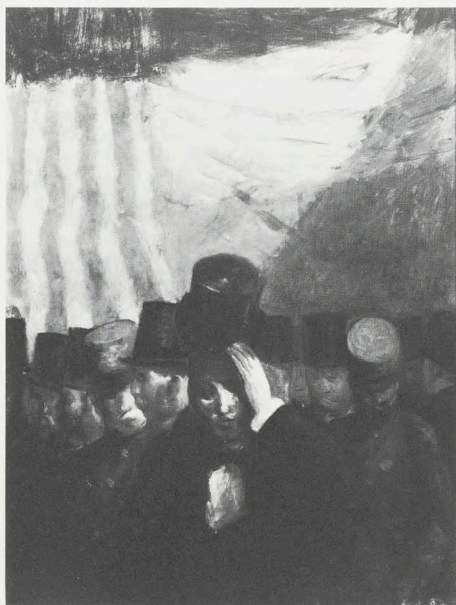
c. 1916

oil on panel

21½ x 16½ (54.6 x 41.9)

signed, l.r.: Guy Pène du Bois

Lent by Holly and Arthur Magill



20 WAITING FOR THE TRAIN.

1917

oil on board

25 x 20 (63.5 x 50.8)

signed, l.r.: Guy Pène du Bois/1917

Lent by The Regis Collection, Inc.



19 NIGHT IN NEW YORK/AT MARTIN'S.

1917

oil on panel

20 x 15 (50.8 x 38.1)

signed, l.r.: Guy Pène du Bois

Lent by Joslyn Art Museum



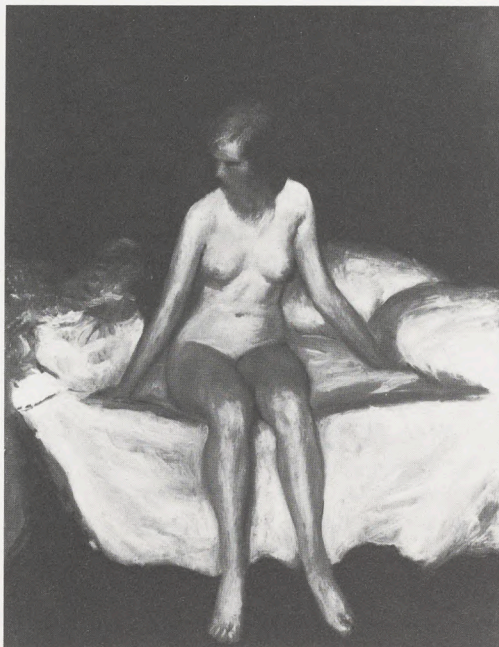
21 SEATED NUDE.

c. 1917-19

oil on panel

25 x 19¾ (63.5 x 50.1)

Lent by The Regis Collection, Inc.



22 A WINDOW IN THE UNION CLUB.

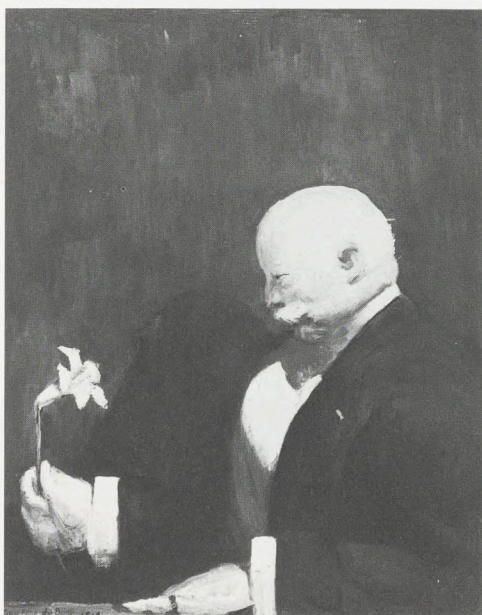
1918

oil on canvas

24 x 20 (61.0 x 50.8)

signed, l.l.: Guy Pène du Bois 1919

Lent by University Gallery, Bequest of Hudson Walker from the Ione and Hudson Walker Collection, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis



The picture was painted for Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney's "Indigenous Painting" Exhibition. "My picture was afterwards exhibited at the Royal Academy in London. It is now in the collection of the Whitney Museum. Called by Mrs. Force *A Window in the Union Club*, it showed an old rounder seated in bulging dress shirt looking with an approach to surprise at a lily. For some time it hung in the entrance hall to the Brisbane house in 9th Street, where it was described more tactfully than truthfully by the wife of one of our fashionable painters of eighteenth-century English portraits. The moment before seeing the picture she had declared in feministic vein that knowing the wife you were certain to know the painter, because her influence was sure to show in his pictures. She turned, after that, full upon the old rake and his flower. It was a difficult moment, but merely served to prove that she was a masterful woman. 'Oh, how nice!' she continued to my wife. 'You can see that he is thinking about his mother.'" (ASTST, p. 191). The date on the painting, 1919, was added later.

23 LAWYERS.

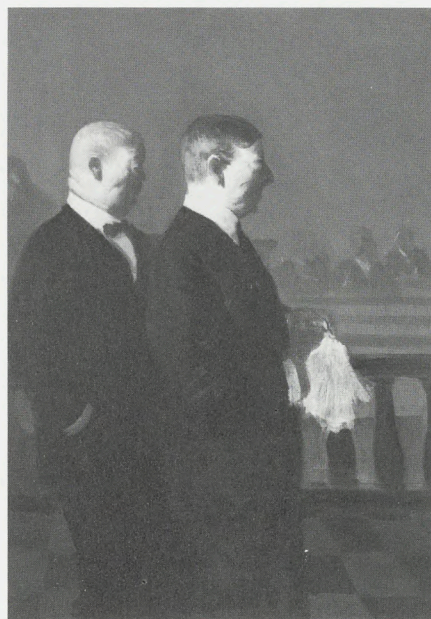
1919

oil on wood panel

20 x 15 1/8 (50.8 x 38.4)

signed, l.r.: Guy Pène du Bois/1919

Lent by Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Smithsonian Institution



"This experience with the jury, as an example, produced a panel called *Lawyers* which is now in the collection of Arthur F. Egner of Newark, another lawyer who, I believe, appreciated some remark on his professional confreres which had seeped into the picture. There was a resemblance to Stanchfield and may have been some to his opponent, whose name I've lost. But the thing I had mainly sought to catch was the marked difference between the two actors on that stage, a difference between subtlety and brutality. Red-headed Stanchfield would stick out his chin and grow rigid in righteous violence, while the other, usually wiping his glasses with a startlingly white kerchief, was gentle and relaxed. He talked to these twelve friends of his confidentially, as he might have addressed a small gathering of fellow-members at his club. The tone of the courtroom would change from high tension to easy relaxation as one or the other commanded it." (ASTST, pp. 195-6).

24 CONVERSATION.

1919

drypoint

6 $\frac{3}{4}$ x 5 $\frac{15}{16}$ (17.1 x 15.1)

signed, l.r.: Guy Pène du Bois '19; in plate, u.l.: G.P.B.

Lent by National Collection of Fine Arts,
Smithsonian Institution



Pène du Bois executed very few prints. Another state of this print is owned by the Whitney Museum (titled *Man and Girl*).

25 SOCIAL REGISTER.

1919

oil on panel

19 $\frac{3}{4}$ x 14 $\frac{3}{4}$ (50.1 x 37.4)

signed, l.l.: Guy Pène du Bois '19

Lent by Mr. and Mrs. Mortimer Spiller



26 VANITY FAIR.

Early 1920s

15 x 12 $\frac{1}{2}$ (38.1 x 31.7)

ink and watercolor on paper

Lent by the Corcoran Gallery of Art; Museum Purchase
through a gift of Mrs. J. L. M. Curry



Pène du Bois wrote a number of criticisms for *Vanity Fair*, and one of his drawings was reproduced in the magazine—"Marionettes at the Metropolitan Opera: A Portrait Gallery of Wooden Puppets Representing the Inevitable Types of Opera Goers in Characteristic Poses." (*Vanity Fair* 19, no. 4 [December 1922]: 641). This particular work seems to be a sketch for a cover, which apparently was never executed.

27 PROFESSOR AT WORK, SELF-PORTRAIT.

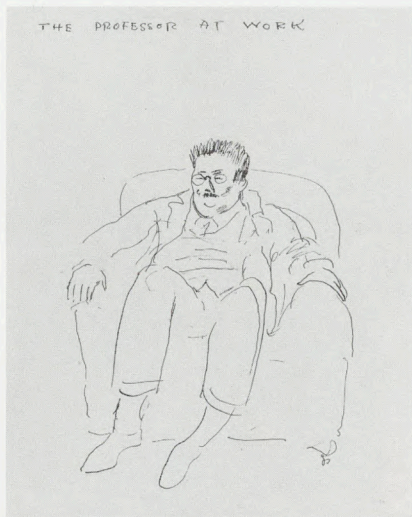
1920s

pen and ink on paper

9 $\frac{7}{8}$ x 7 $\frac{3}{4}$ (25.1 x 19.7)

inscribed across top: THE PROFESSOR AT WORK

Lent by The Pène du Bois Collection



29 CHANTICLEER.

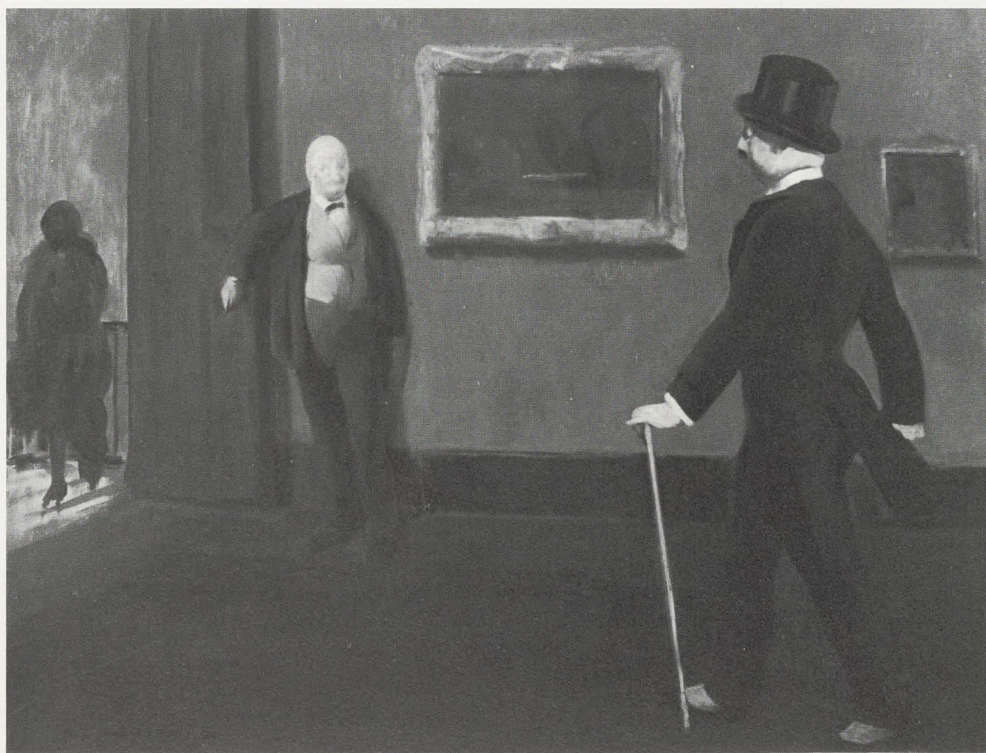
1922

oil on canvas

24 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 32 (62.2 x 81.3)

signed, l.l.: Guy Pène du Bois '22

Lent by San Diego Museum of Art



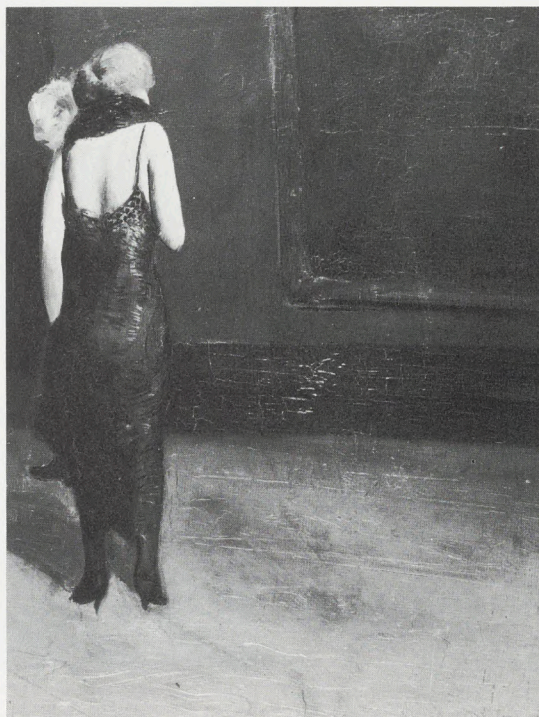
28 JULIANA FORCE AT THE WHITNEY STUDIO CLUB.

1921

oil on wood

20 x 15 (50.8 x 38.0)

Lent by Whitney Museum of American Art, New York;
Gift of Mr. and Mrs. James S. Adams in memory of
Philip K. Hutchins



30 THE BEACH.

1924

oil on panel

3 panels, each 20 x 15 (50.8 x 38.1)

signed 1st panel, l.l.: Guy Pène du Bois 24;

other 2 panels, l.r.: Guy Pène du Bois 24

Lent by University of Nebraska Art Galleries, Lincoln;
F. M. Hall Collection



Guy Pène du Bois appears as the left figure in the right panel. "I worked on the other panel of a two panel picture of Compo Beach, bathers largely. I worked from about ten to four. The women in both panels are portraits. Now I think of adding another panel on which there will appear some of the men of our crowd. This panel is rather tentative. It does not interest me so much as the others have. The background of water and sky in the second one is so superior to the first, so much lighter, more real, deeper, that I shall have to go back to the first again. This thing, though, of painting people from memory amuses me more and is finer in result than anything I do. In this particular instance I feel that I have done something new to me. The number of seriously and individually treated figures—there are ten—is in itself a departure, and the result, surely, of reading Delacroix. The thing contains nothing approaching that grand manner of which he was so fond. It very decidedly, on the contrary, contains a great deal of very local detail. The swing of line is rather abrupt than eloquent. The color is rich but not varied enough or wanting in fluency. I've become mannered in color or got into a rut. But this picture is in no sense finished. I think it is large in spacing and strong in the lighting. It is in this last, perhaps, that I feel an advance over my other work. Truly I have but begun to paint." (Diary, 16 September 1924). "I could work on the picture another month building and clarifying and reworking. It is realized. But realized incompletely. It is still not mere polish that it needs. It must be made more fluid. More blood should be injected or, for another word, more warmth. I fight myself to conquer the bravery needed to, willy, nilly, continue it. Too many of my pictures have left half said. . . . I must properly see that picture. I should like to add

another panel to it, another at the crowded end and continuing the crowded state. Perhaps if I take measurements and color notes I may be able to do the third panel when the other two have been delivered to Kraushaar. . . . The third panel won't work without the others, there would be too little pleasure in doing it at haphazard. I should be sick with wanting to see it joined to the others. There is a largeness in this design. The thing might be made a tremendous bit of reality. It has movement. It could have more. It is without a definite mood. No such veil is over it. The people are associated and not associated. They are not melted in one pot, not the pawns of a prevailing atmosphere or social condition. This exists, but the units are individuals. Their being wheels in the machinery of composition does not belittle them. They are not dyed in one color. They are not worms. While their actions are insignificant enough I should like to give to them, as a whole, great majesty. Something of that may now be in the picture and out of it, lending this suggestion to me. I should love someone to give patience to my debtors. I cannot give this thing up now. It is one of the works which, in another month's labor, might be made to truly express me." (Diary, 17 September 1924). "The Beach picture progressed very well today. I worked about four hours on it. The idea of a third panel is terribly alluring." (Diary, 18 September 1924). "I did another picture from memory at that same period in the studio. It was of a group of friends in bathing suits on Compo Beach. In three panels it portrayed the Sam McCoys, Harry Davises, Clarkie Terriss, Clive Weed, the Jack Hilders, a stranger or two put in for good measure or composition and the du Boises along with their daughter Yvonne, who was then about eight years old." (ASTST, p. 214).

31 MR. AND MRS. CHESTER DALE DINING OUT.

1924

oil on canvas

30 x 40 (76.2 x 100.6)

Lent by The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of
Chester Dale, 1963



Dale, who began to collect Pène du Bois' works after World War I, eventually owned 25. "Spent this afternoon working on the portraits of Mr. and Mrs. Chester Dale seated at a table in the Brevoort, going only fairly well. The likenesses are good, the figures are stiff. The composition does not pull together. It has little of the conclusive air that I manage to get into my other pictures. The thing worries me for I must get it done for their return from Europe about the 15th of this month. . . . Chester Dale, a red haired Englishman, long enough in this country to have lost his native accent, is now my best patron. Patron is the word that an artist uses instead of customer or client. . . . Perhaps the customers of artists are philanthropists. This is a great dose to swallow. The shoe should be on the other foot—the artists the philanthropists. But this Chester Dale really likes my things. He must. He now owns fifteen of them. No other man owns so many, not even myself. Somehow, and this seems very curious to me in view of my poverty, I own but three or four of my finished pictures and Kraushaar my dealer not many more. But I am painting very few things now and many, a majority of those, are studies which never get to the picture stage." (Diary, 3 May 1924). "Recently I've been interviewing with the intention of writing an article for one of the many success magazines which are made to amaze the unthinking. Their articles are collections of facts, sometimes antiplutarch, but always made to show that with enough hard work any one could be in the

heroes' shoes. I should not like to be in Mr. Dale's shoes, if being in them meant being as nervous and really muddled as their owner. He has money. His glories have to be in things money can buy him for they are absolutely not in him. He is one of those forced to stand by his pile of gold in order to have any beauty at all." (Diary, 4 August 1936). "And of all the shoppers the collector Chester Dale is certainly the most trying. I made only one tour with him that I can remember and while it was worth doing once, that was enough. This one, with the shops not widely separated, was done on foot. It turned into a breathless race for me until I thought of learning where he was going and then, at a more leisurely pace, meeting him there later. No one complies more readily and realistically with the rhythms of nerves than does Chester Dale. He is without question the slave of his nerves. And they, it seems to me, are unchangeable New Yorkers. Certainly the ease in the pace of Paris meant nothing to them. They went on commanding speed with such continuity that for that whole day in Paris, Dale had the appearance of a robber being chased by a policeman, or of a man who, having mislaid his soul somewhere, cannot pay the slightest attention to anything around him until he has picked it up again and placed it where it belongs. Whether the soul ever works like a regular one when re-embodied by these men of action is a question they will themselves have to answer . . . if they can ever get around to it." (ASTST, p. 251).

32 SOCIAL GOSSIP.

c. 1925

watercolor and conté crayon on paper

14½ x 11½ (36.8 x 29.2) [sight]

signed, l.r.: Guy Pène du Bois

Lent by Caroline and Sheldon Keck



34 MAN WITH BOTTLE.

c. 1925

pen and ink on paper

10¾ x 14 (27.3 x 35.1)

Lent by Graham Gallery, New York



33 GIRLS, CHAMPS ELYSEES.

c. 1925

oil on canvas

21¾ x 18¼ (55.2 x 46.3)

signed, l.r.: G. P. du Bois

Lent by Mr. and Mrs. J. Ripley Fehr



35 ARTIST'S WIFE, NO. 2.

1926

oil on canvas

57 x 45 (144.8 x 114.3)

signed, l.l.: Guy Pène du Bois

Lent by The Chrysler Museum, Norfolk, Virginia



"My efforts to paint my so very familiar Floy seem more and more futile as I work on the portrait. I know her much too well. I try to carry paint into channels unknown to it. I want a wider scope than she has, paint I mean, given me. Sometimes I think too much time has been thrown at this barren canvas . . . my stubbornness in clinging to it. But this thing, as a defeat would, I am afraid, be too much for my morale." (Diary, 17 March 1926). "A portrait of Floy on which I've been a long time working seems today on a fair way to completion. The head is one of the most complete—fuller in detail, than anything I've yet done. But I should like to have the picture with me for, at least, a year, in order to better think out the composition. I'm much too slow witted to do rapid work." (Diary, 22 March 1926). "Most of the painting that I've been doing on a large portrait of Floy has been so complicated by technical difficulties, pure workman troubles, that I've done no thinking whatever of any other sort and, really, damned little of that. But the picture may come out in better form through intuitional processes." (Diary, 26 March 1926).

36 MORNING, PARIS CAFE.

1926

oil on canvas

36 $\frac{1}{4}$ x 28 $\frac{3}{4}$ (92.1 x 73.0)

signed, l.r.: Guy Pène du Bois/26

Lent by Whitney Museum of American Art, New York



"It is comparatively easy for me to write about the other fellows' pictures. . . the job becomes confoundingly difficult on my own. I had seen the girl one evening at the Cafe du Dôme, one of those crowded evenings, and had made a lot of sketches of her, which I'm sure because of her great detachment she did not catch me doing. She stood out, a spot of peace in the packed and gesticulating crowd, graceful and unconscious of not belonging, like a stretch of Gregorian chants in the middle of a piece of Irving Berlin. I'm quite sure she was from the South, possibly Toulon, inflammable enough underneath, probably or certainly, but a veritable Isis on the surface. This with reservations, for somehow, I knew that she was distinctly on the human side, soft with no really cold and white hardness, this temperamentally of course. The vanity and selfishness of the artist is proverbial. I probably did her an injustice in the end, sitting her at breakfast in a much less important cafe, even though this one was built for her. But breakfast! I regret that faux pas. Breakfast out of bed is for those poor puritans moved by conscience into working. My girl could give these scrawny people lessons in the divinity of indolence. If I ever paint her at breakfast again she'll be in a bed piled high with pillows." Pène du Bois, quoted in *Forty-Eight American Pictures of the Year, 1936-1937*, First Group of Twelve, Living American Art, NYC, cat. #13.

37 SAINT NAZAIRE BUGLERS ANNOUNCING THE PUBLIC KISS.

1926

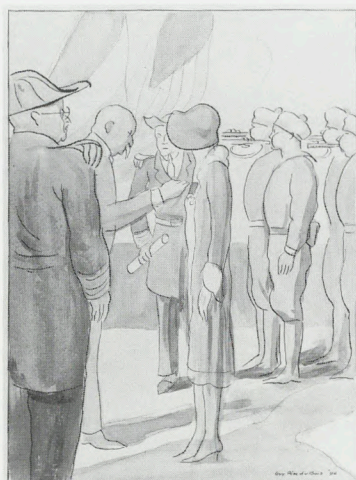
watercolor on paper

13 $\frac{5}{8}$ x 9 $\frac{5}{8}$ (34.5 x 24.5) [sight]

signed, l.r.: Guy Pène du Bois '26; inscribed below image:

SAINT NAZAIRE • BUGLERS ANNOUNCING THE PUBLIC KISS •
JUNE TWENTY-SIX • NINETEEN • HUNDRED • AND • TWENTY-SIX

Lent by Mrs. Flora Whitney Miller



SAINT NAZAIRE • BUGLERS ANNOUNCING THE PUBLIC KISS • JUNE TWENTY-SIX • NINETEEN HUNDRED AND TWENTY-SIX

39 SAINT NAZAIRE BANQUET.

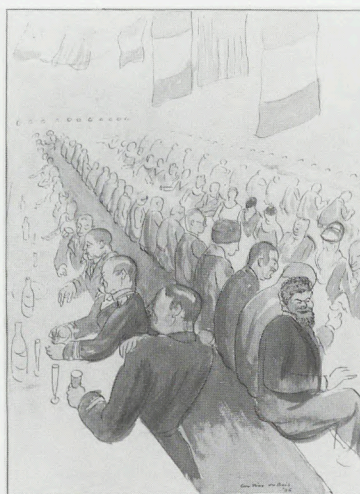
1926

watercolor on paper

13 $\frac{7}{8}$ x 10 (35.3 x 25.4) [sight]

signed, l.r.: Guy Pène du Bois, 26; inscribed, below image: SAINT NAZAIRE THE • BANQUET; THE • OFFICER'S • MESS; THE • SPEAKER'S • TABLE AND, BECAUSE • OF • THE • SIZE • OF • THIS • PAPER, ONLY • A • FEW OF • THE • PEOPLE • PRESENT.

Lent by Mrs. Flora Whitney Miller



SAINT NAZAIRE THE BANQUET; THE OFFICER'S MESS; THE SPEAKER'S TABLE AND, BECAUSE OF THE SIZE OF THIS PAPER, ONLY A FEW OF THE PEOPLE PRESENT.

38 SAINT NAZAIRE REPOPULATED BY YOUTH . . .

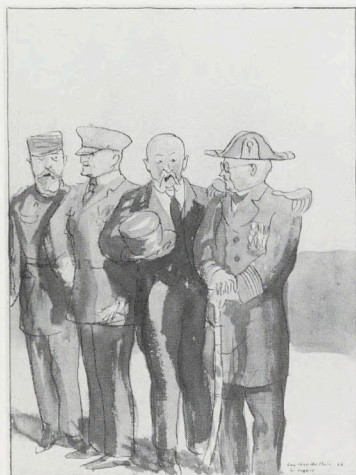
1926

watercolor on paper

13 11/16 x 9 $\frac{5}{8}$ (34.5 x 24.5) [sight]

signed, l.r.: Guy Pène du Bois '26 St. Nazaire; inscribed, below image: SAINT NAZAIRE, REPOPULATED • BY • THE • YOUTH • WHO • WENT • TO • WAR, ON • THE • OCCASION • OF • THE • DEDICATION • OF • THE • AMERICAN • MONUMENT • JUNE • TWENTY • SIXTH—1926

Lent by Mrs. Flora Whitney Miller



SAINT NAZAIRE, REPOPULATED BY THE YOUTH WHO WENT TO WAR, ON THE OCCASION OF THE DEDICATION OF THE AMERICAN MONUMENT, JUNE TWENTY-SIXTH—1926

40 OPERA BOX.

1926

oil on canvas

20 x 25 (50.1 x 63.5)

signed, l.r.: Guy Pène du Bois

Lent by Mrs. Flora Whitney Miller

The sitter is Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney.



41 OPERA BOX.

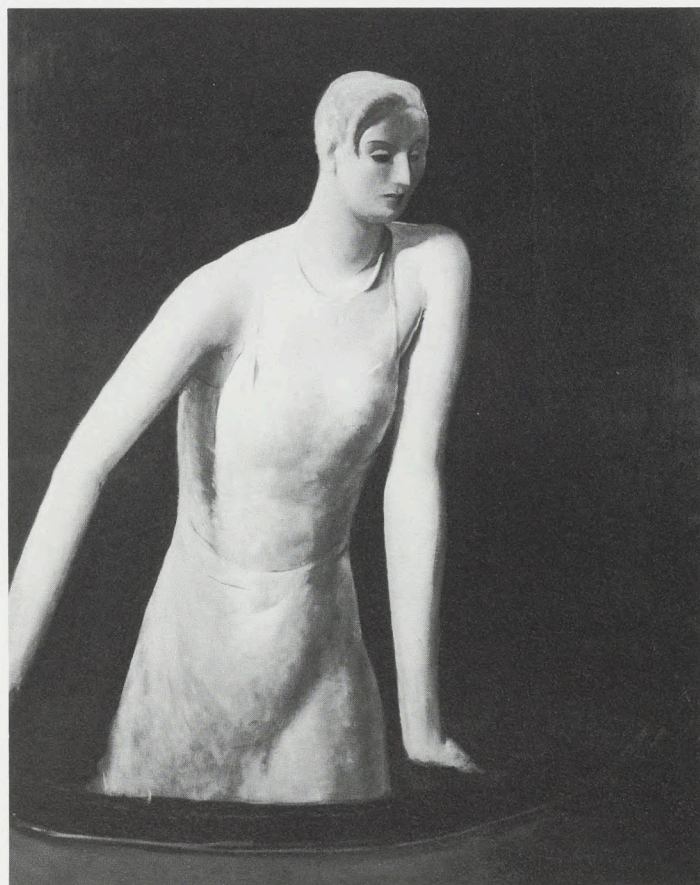
1926

oil on canvas

57½ x 45¼ (146.0 x 114.9)

signed, l.r.: Guy Pène du Bois '26

Lent by Whitney Museum of American Art, New York
(31.184)



42 PETS.

1927

oil on canvas

21 $\frac{7}{8}$ x 18 $\frac{3}{8}$ (55.5 x 46.7)

signed, l.l.: Guy Pène du Bois '27

Lent by Mr. and Mrs. Ira Glackens



43 TWO GIRLS, MONTMARTRE.

1927

oil on canvas

21 $\frac{3}{4}$ x 18 (55.2 x 45.7)

signed, l.l.: Guy Pène du Bois/'27

Lent by The Phillips Collection, Washington, D.C.



44 TO ANTOINETTE WITH AFFECTION.

1927

oil on canvas

13 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 10 (34.3 x 25.4)

inscribed and signed, l.r.: TO ANTOINETTE K/
Guy Pène du Bois/WITH AFFECTION '27

Lent by Antoinette Kraushaar



45 RACETRACK, DEAUVILLE.

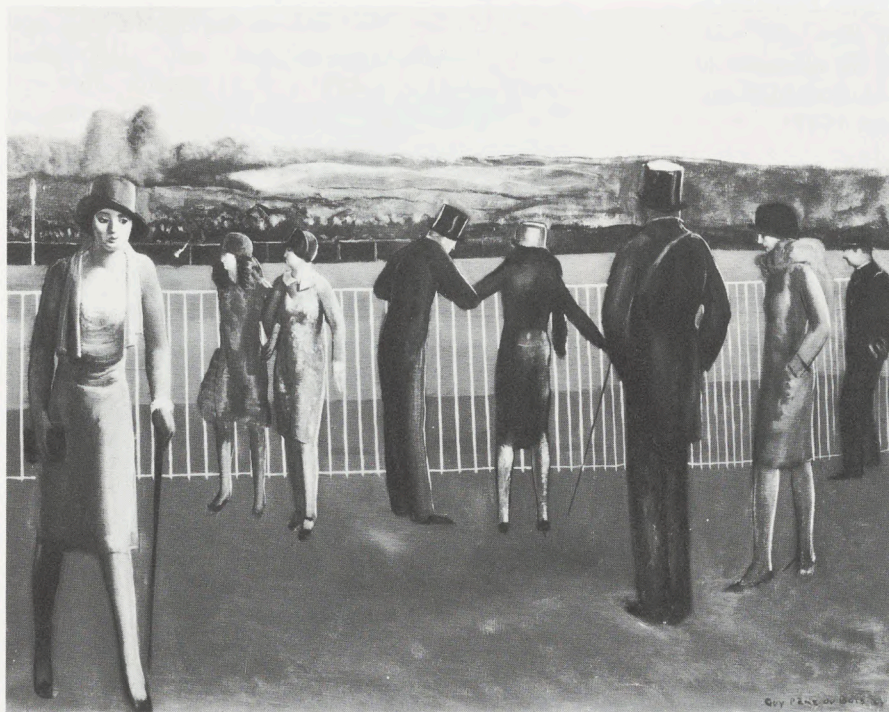
1927

oil on canvas

28 $\frac{7}{8}$ x 36 $\frac{3}{8}$ (73.3 x 92.4)

signed, l.r.: Guy Pène du Bois 27

Museum of Art, Carnegie Institute, Pittsburgh



46 AMERICANS IN PARIS

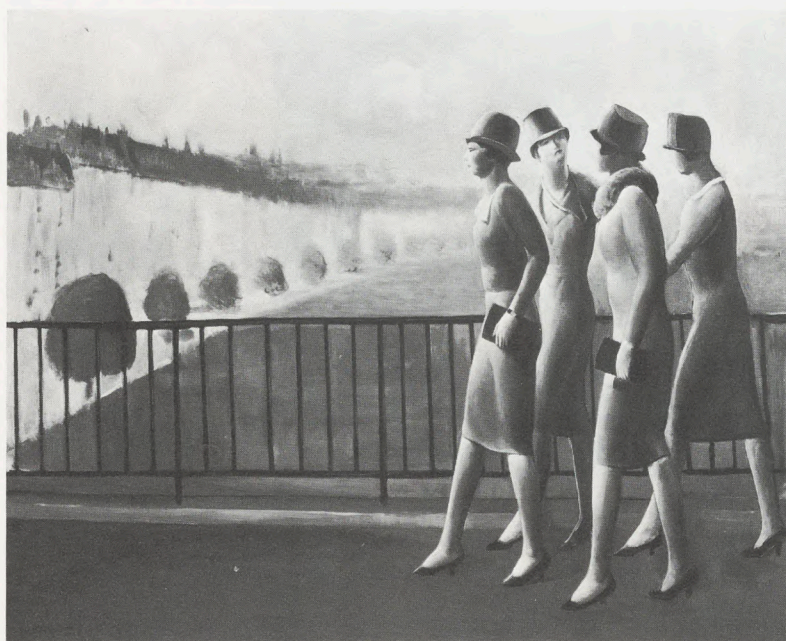
1927

oil on canvas

28 $\frac{3}{4}$ x 36 $\frac{3}{8}$ (73.0 x 92.4)

signed, l.l.: Guy Pène du Bois/27

Lent by The Museum of Modern Art, New York, Given anonymously, 1935.



"What more is there to say? While of course it is true that it takes all kinds of Americans to make Paris—all ages and all degrees of corpulence and thinness—still as

one thinks back quickly, one sees as the most triumphant note of the travel tapestry, a procession of tall, slender, modishly dressed young American women; and four of

these Mr. du Bois has caught as they swoop down upon their prey. They are very determined and, superficially at least, very much alike. Were they to stand in a row their knee-length skirts would form a perfectly straight line. Their hats are small and close-fitting, their fashionable shoes undistinguishable. You feel that they will miss nothing worthwhile; that anything they do miss should not be considered really worthwhile." ("American Painters' Work," *New York Times*, 11 December 1927).

48 PEOPLE.

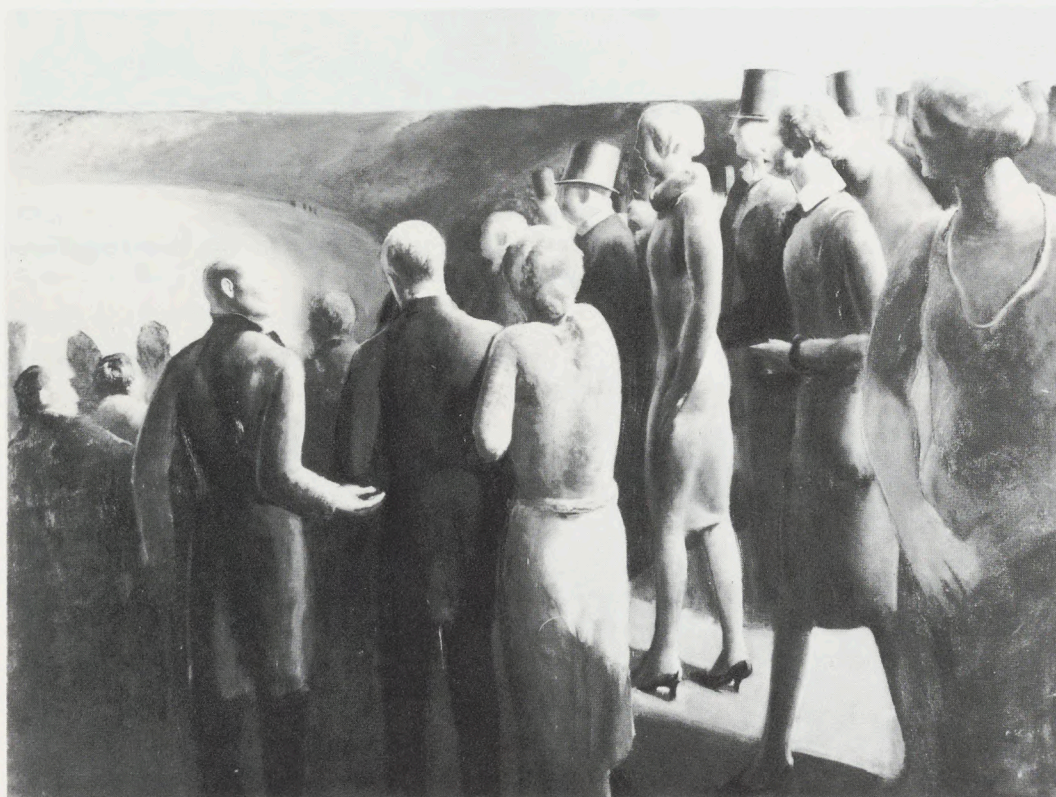
1927

oil on canvas

45 x 57½ (114.3 x 140.6)

signed, l.l.: Guy Pène du Bois 1927

Lent by The Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, Temple Fund Purchase, 1943.



"I have a great picture in progress—an eight [figure?] with very many figures in it. They are overlooking that which might be a football field if it were smaller. I hope it fulfills the promise it has given me. But I can make it do that." (Diary, 5 October 1927).

47 CARICATURE, JOHN KRAUSHAAR.

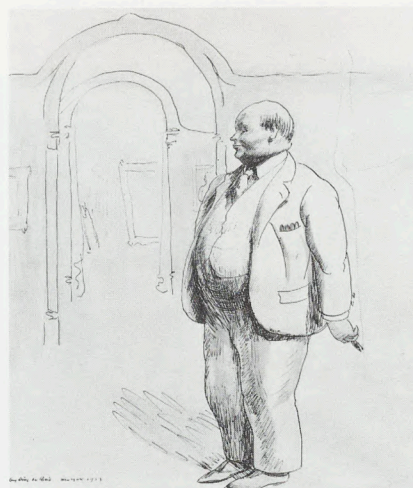
1927

watercolor on paper

14 x 11¾ (35.0 x 29.8) [sight]

signed, l.l.: Guy Pène du Bois New York 1927

Lent by Antoinette Kraushaar



49 EARLY MORNING, PARIS MARKET.

1928

watercolor on paper

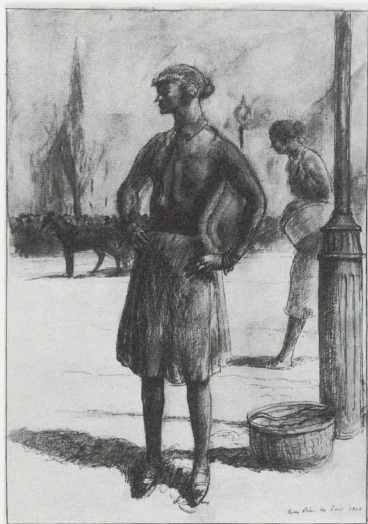
19 1/4 x 12 (48.9 x 30.5)

signed, l.r.: Guy Pène du Bois 1928;

inscribed, l.r.: I consider this one of my/very best water colors./G P du B/P.S. It is a masterpiece;

inscribed, l.l.: Early Morning, Paris Market

Lent by Mr. and Mrs. Ira Glackens



50 TRIO.

1928

pen and ink on paper

12 x 7 (30.5 x 17.8)

signed, l.r.: Guy Pène du Bois '28

Lent by Whitney Museum of American Art, New York



51 STUDIO WINDOW, ANTICOLI.

1928

oil on canvas

37 x 29 (94.0 x 73.7)

signed, l.r.: Guy Pène du Bois/28

Lent by The Westmoreland County Museum of Art, The William A. Coulter Fund



52 BAL DES QUARTRES ARTS.

1929

oil on canvas

28¾ x 36½ (73.0 x 92.7)

signed, l.l.: Guy Pène du Bois 29

Lent by the David and Alfred Smart Gallery of The University of Chicago, Chicago, IL., Gift of William Benton



"I've begun a picture of a masquerade ball. I believe I shall do many of them. Their opportunity for social satire is limitless. . . . They permit almost any sort of comment and no end of symbolism. Costumes, poses, gestures, interlockings. Life can easily be made plain. Contrasts can be imposing and compositions monumental. I wonder I never thought of them this way before." (Diary, 28 March 1929). "I called this canvas *The Beaux Arts Ball*. It might be any costume ball. It was painted at Garnes par Dampierre, Seine-et-Oise, France, in a little farmhouse we occupied for about six years. The grange had been converted into quite a magnificent studio. Not much attention was paid to any locale. I never made a sketch at a costume ball in my life. But it seems to me that the costumes at once reveal character better than the regimented clothes of everyday life." (Pène du Bois quoted in Grace Pagano and Donald Bear, *Contemporary American Painting: The Encyclopedia Britannica Collection*. New York: Duell, Sloan and Pearce, 1945; #38). Pène du Bois is shown in the center dancing with a woman. This is the second version. The first was about 20 feet long and covered half of the studio wall. Never finished, it was one of the many canvases left behind when the Pène du Bois family returned to America in 1930.

53 COUNTRY WEDDING.

1929

oil on canvas

36 x 29 (91.4 x 73.6)

signed, l.l.: Guy Pène du Bois 29

Lent by Mrs. Flora Whitney Miller



54 CONVERSATION.

1929

ink on paper

9½ x 9¾ (24.1 x 24.8)

signed, l.r.: Guy Pène du Bois 1929

Lent by Whitney Museum of American Art, New York



55 APPROACHING STORM, RACETRACK.

1929

oil on canvas

29 x 36 (73.6 x 91.5)

signed, l.l.: Guy Pène du Bois '29

Lent by Mr. and Mrs. Irwin L. Bernstein



56 WOMAN WITH CIGARETTE.

1929

oil on canvas

36 $\frac{1}{4}$ x 28 $\frac{3}{4}$ (92.1 x 73.0)

signed, l.l.: Guy Pène du Bois 29

Lent by Whitney Museum of American Art, New York
(31.187)



57 TRAPEZE PERFORMERS.

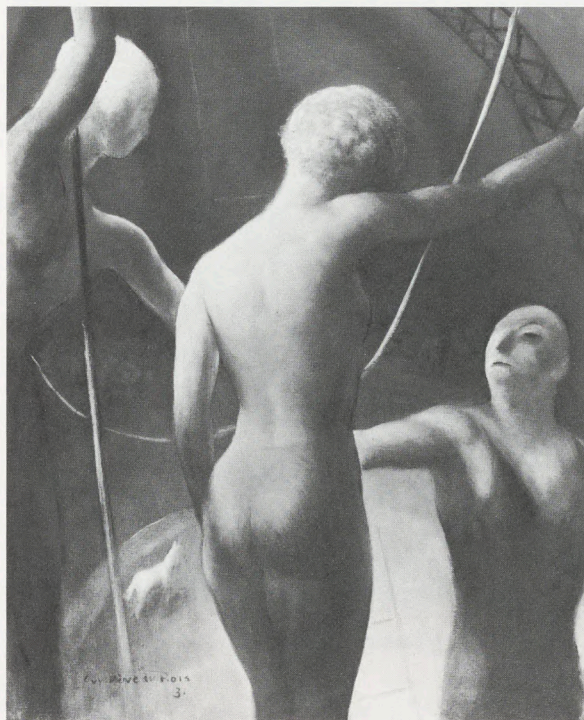
1931

oil on canvas

25 x 20 (63.5 x 50.8)

signed, l.l.: Guy Pène du Bois / 31

Lent by The Butler Institute of American Art,
Youngstown, Ohio



58 THREE FIGURES.

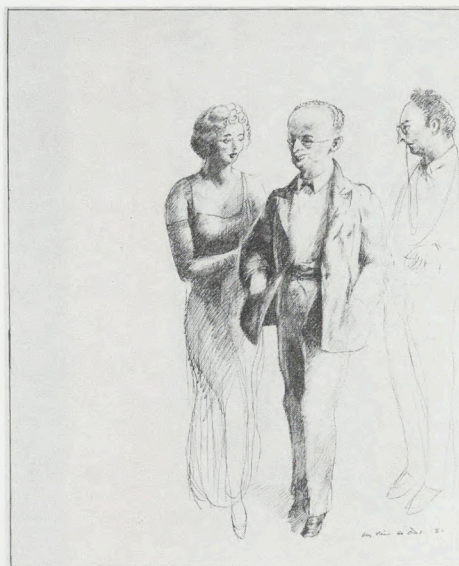
1931

pen and ink on paper

18 $\frac{3}{4}$ x 15 $\frac{1}{4}$ (47.6 x 38.7)

signed, l.r.: Guy Pène du Bois 31

Lent by The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Bequest
of Emma A. Sheaffer, 1973



59 MAN AND WOMAN ON BENCH.

1931

pen and ink on paper

14 x 11 (35.5 x 27.9)

signed, l.r.: Guy Pène du Bois '31

Lent by The Butler Institute of American Art,
Youngstown, Ohio



60 TERRACE, PARIS CAFE.

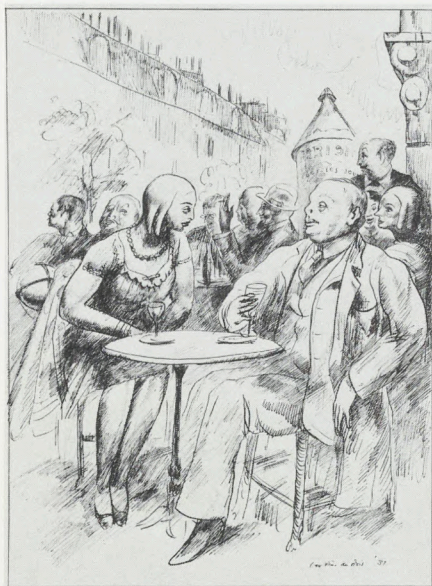
1931

pen and ink on paper

13 $\frac{3}{4}$ x 10 (34.9 x 25.4)

signed, l.r.: Guy Pène du Bois '31

Lent by the Corcoran Gallery of Art; Museum Purchase through a gift of Mrs. J. L. M. Curry



61 LYTTON STRACHEY.

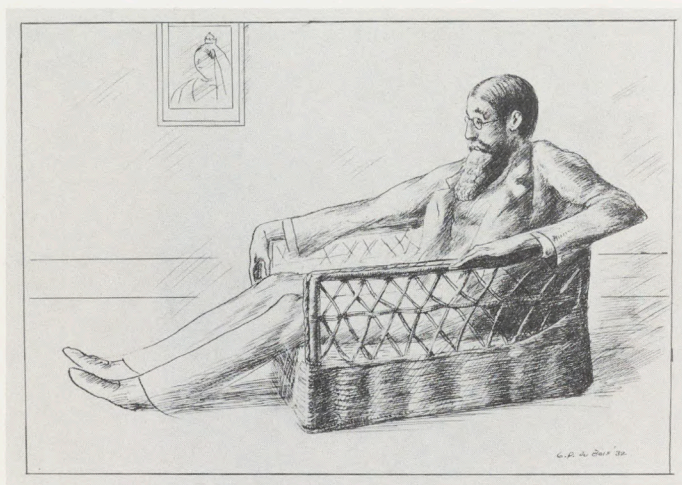
1932

pen and ink over pencil on paper

10 $\frac{3}{4}$ x 13 $\frac{3}{8}$ (27.3 x 34.0)

signed, l.r.: G. P. du Bois '32

Lent by The Pène du Bois Collection



This was one of a series of illustrations Pène du Bois executed to accompany reviews in *The Saturday Review of Literature* between October 1931 and February 1932. This one appeared accompanying "Lytton Strachey" by Claude W. Fuess (8, no. 20 [6 February 1932]: 501).

62 WOMAN WITH MACHINES.

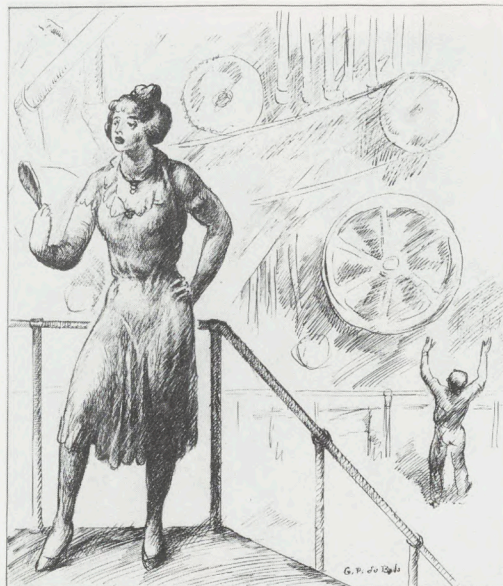
c. 1931-32

pen and ink on paper

10 x 8 $\frac{3}{4}$ (25.4 x 22.2)

signed, l.r.: G. P. du Bois

Lent by Graham Gallery, New York



This, too, was probably created to illustrate a review in *The Saturday Review of Literature*; however, it was never published.

63 MURA DEHN IN DANCE COSTUME.

1932

oil on canvas

20 x 25 (50.8 x 63.5)

signed, l.l.: Guy Pène du Bois 32

Lent by The Pène du Bois Collection

In 1919, Mura Ziporovitch, a Russian ballet dancer, moved from Odessa to Vienna with her family. Here she met the American artist Adolf Dehn in 1922. They were married in 1926 and divorced in 1931. Yvonne studied with her.



64 PORTRAIT OF A WOMAN.

1932

oil on canvas

36 x 29 (91.5 x 73.7)

signed, l.l.: Guy Pène du Bois 32

Lent by Rhode Island School of Design, Museum of Art



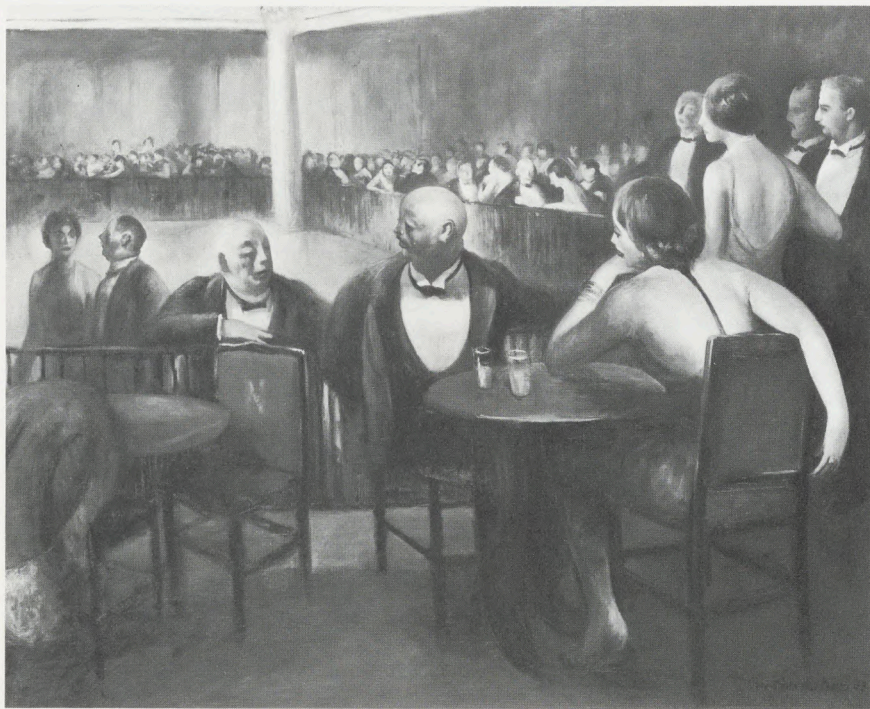
The model is Julia Sullivan, who also posed for *Reclining Nude* and John Sloan's *Miscationary*. Depicted in a riding habit, she used to go riding with Yvonne when they were in Norfolk, Connecticut.

65 NIGHTCLUB.

1933

oil on canvas

29 $\frac{1}{8}$ x 36 (74.0 x 91.5)



signed, l.r.: Guy Pène du Bois 33

Lent by Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden,
Smithsonian Institution

Forbes Watson and Guy Pène du Bois are portrayed
standing at the far right of the scene.

66 ART STUDENT.

1934

oil on canvas

35 $\frac{7}{8}$ x 28 $\frac{3}{4}$ (91.1 x 73.0)

signed, l.r.: Guy Pène du Bois '34

Private Collection



The blonde woman is Lenna Glackens, the daughter of William Glackens. She studied with Pène du Bois as did her brother, Ira, and was a good friend of Yvonne's while growing up. The work was painted when the Pène du Bois family was living at 3 Washington Square North.

67 DRAPED MODEL.

1935

pen and ink over pencil on paper

15½ x 12½ (39.4 x 30.8)

signed, l.l.: Guy Pène du Bois 1935

Lent by Graham Gallery, New York



69 FEMALE NUDE.

c. 1935

pen and ink on paper

13⅛ x 9¼ (33.3 x 23.2)

signed, l.l.: Guy Pène du Bois

Lent by The Pène du Bois Collection



68 CARNIVAL INTERLUDE.

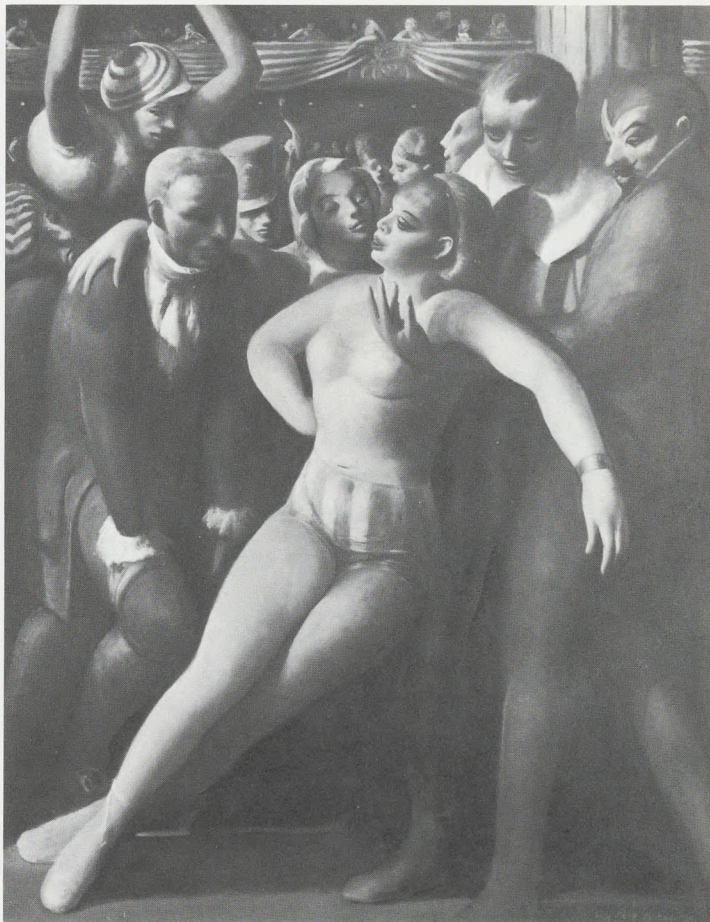
1935

oil on canvas

57 x 44¾ (144.8 x 113.6)

signed, l.r.: Guy Pène du Bois '35

Lent by Mr. and Mrs. Norman Levy



This work received the \$300 Altman Prize when it was shown in 1936 at the 11th Annual exhibition of the National Academy of Design.

70 MEDITATION.

1936

oil on canvas

38½ x 28⅜ (97.8 x 72.1)

signed, l.r.: Guy Pène du Bois '36

Lent by Marvin and Heidi Trachtenberg



This painting won the Second William A. Clark Prize of \$1500 and the Corcoran Silver Medal when it was shown in 1937 at the 15th Biennial of the Corcoran Gallery of Art. "The work is one of du Bois' best, and has his characteristic rich and strong color." ("The Corcoran: American Cross-Section," *Art News* 35, no. 27 [3 April 1937]: 14).

71 CLUB MEETING.

1936

oil on canvas

24 x 20 (61.0 x 50.8)

signed, l.r.: Guy Pène du Bois '36

Lent by The Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, Gilpin Fund Purchase, 1939



72 RECLINING NUDE.

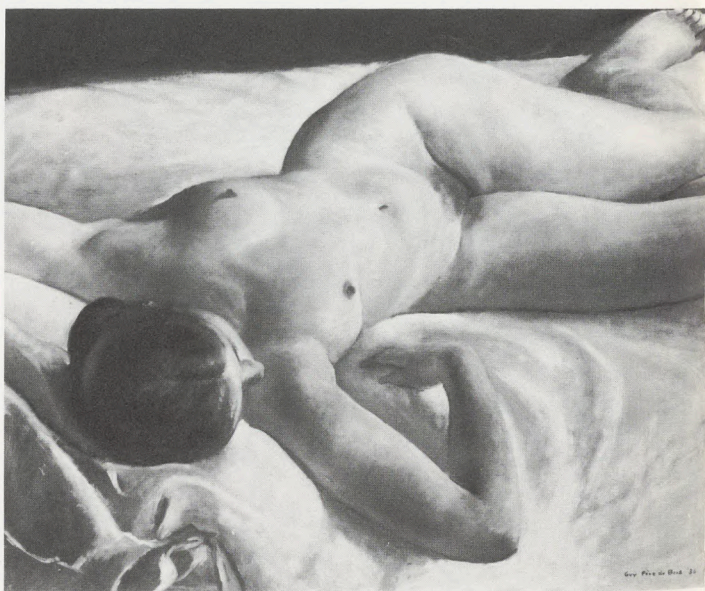
1936

oil on canvas

29 x 36 (73.7 x 91.5)

signed, l.r.: Guy Pène du Bois '36

Lent by Art Gallery of Hamilton, Gift of the Women's Committee, 1964



The model is Julia Sullivan, who also posed for *Portrait of a Woman* and John Sloan's *Miscationary*.

73 GIRLS AGAINST THE SKY.

1937

oil on canvas

39 9/16 x 60 1/4 (100.5 x 153.0)

signed, l.r.: Guy Pène du Bois/1937

Ertegun Collection Group



74 SOCIETY LEADER/HOUSTESS.

1938

watercolor and ink on paper

15 3/8 x 10 5/16 (39.0 x 26.2)

signed, l.r.: Guy Pène du Bois '38;

verso: sketch of two seated male figures in conversation
Lent by Montclair Art Museum, Bequest in the Memory
of Moses and Ida Soyer, 1974



75 A GROUP OF ARTIST FRIENDS.

1938

watercolor on paper

14 x 10 1/2 (35.5 x 26.7)

signed, l.l.: Guy Pène du Bois 1938

Lent by New Britain Museum of American Art (Harriet
Russell Stanley Fund)



The artists have been identified from left to right as:
Jerome Myers, unknown, Leon Kroll, Ernest Lawson,
Mahonri Young, and William Glackens.

76 YVONNE IN A PURPLE COAT/GREEN DRESS.

1938

oil on canvas

40 x 30 (101.6 x 76.2)

signed, l.l.: Guy Pène du Bois '38

Lent by New Britain Museum of American Art (Harriet Russell Stanley Fund)

A portrait of his daughter, Yvonne, one of his favorite subjects.



77 WATCHING THE FLEET.

1938

oil on canvas

24 x 34 (61.0 x 76.2)

signed, l.r.: Guy Pène du Bois '38

Lent by The Wichita Art Association



78 AT AN EXHIBITION.

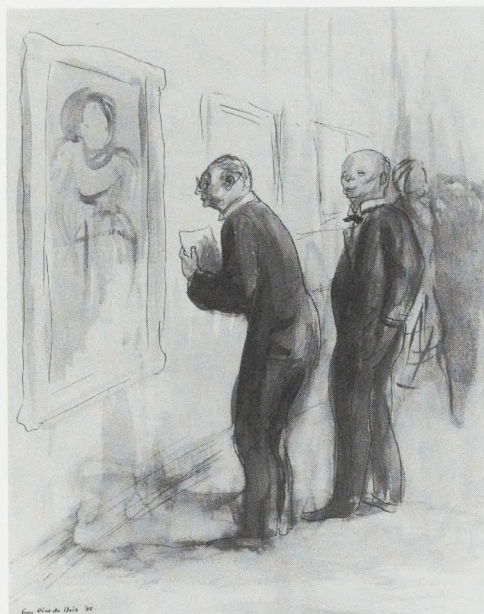
1938

watercolor on paper

16 15/16 x 13 3/8 (43.0 x 34.0)

signed, l.l.: Guy Pène du Bois '38

Lent by Mr. and Mrs. Ira Glackens



80 THE JURY.

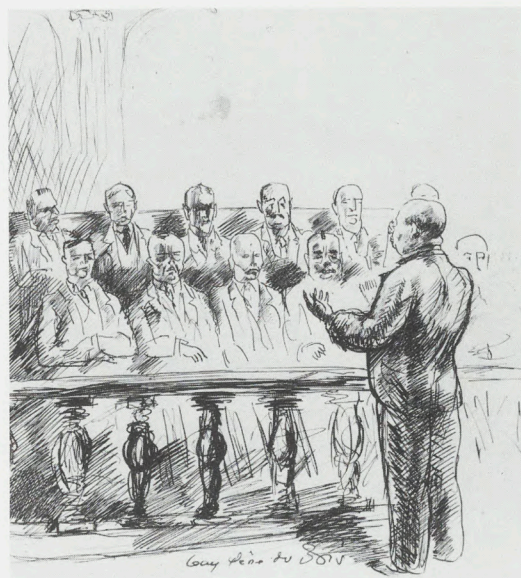
c. 1940

pen and ink on paper

10 5/8 x 9 3/8 (27.7 x 23.8)

signed, l.c.: Guy Pène du Bois

Lent by the Corcoran Gallery of Art; Museum Purchase through a gift of Mrs. J. L. M. Curry



79 SELF-PORTRAIT.

conte crayon on paper

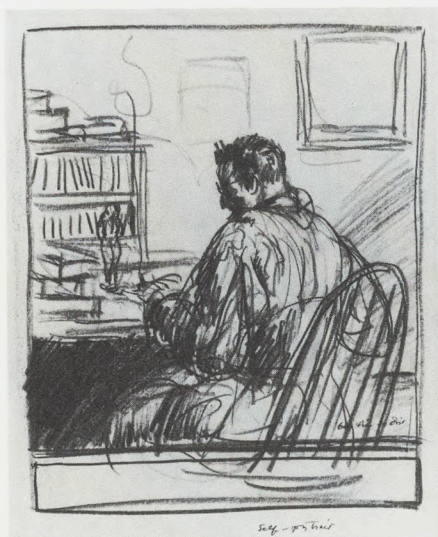
c. 1940

12 1/8 x 17 3/8 (30.7 x 44.1)

signed, l.r.: Guy Pène du Bois;

inscribed l.r.: Self-portrait

Lent by Michael A. Glass



81 SOLITAIRE.

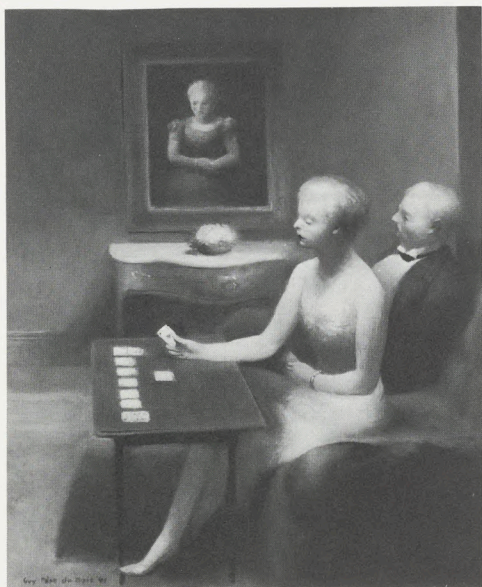
1943

oil on canvas

30 x 25 (71.2 x 60.4)

signed, l.l.: Guy Pène du Bois '43

Collection of the International Business Machines Corporation, Armonk, New York



82 FORTY-SECOND STREET.

1945

oil on canvas

32 1/2 x 26 (82.5 x 66.0)

signed, l.r.: Guy Pène du Bois

Lent by Mrs. Muriel C. Weingrow, Old Westbury, New York



83 COCKTAILS.

1945

oil on canvas

29 x 36 (73.7 x 91.4)

signed, l.l.: Guy Pène du Bois

Lent by The Metropolitan Museum of Art, George A. Hearn Fund, 1946

This painting was begun at Stonington, Connecticut, and finished in New York City. It depicts a cocktail party at the home of Dr. Williams in Stonington. When it was shown at the 120th Annual of the National Academy of Design, it was awarded the First Altman Prize of \$1200.



84 DIANE/DIANA.

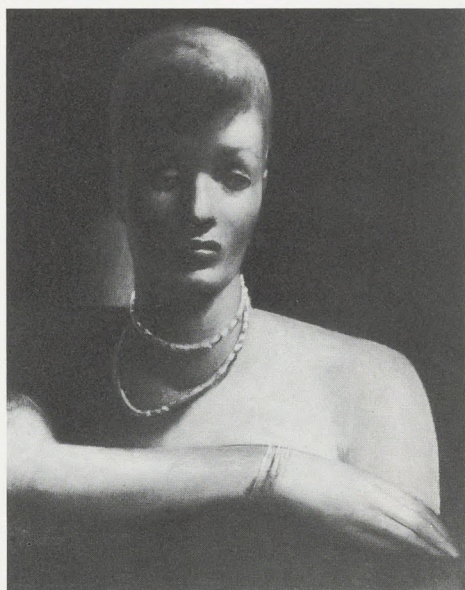
1946

oil on canvas

24 x 18 (60.9 x 45.7)

signed, l.l.: Guy Pène du Bois

Lent by The Pène du Bois Collection



86 INTERLUDE/ THE APPRAISAL.

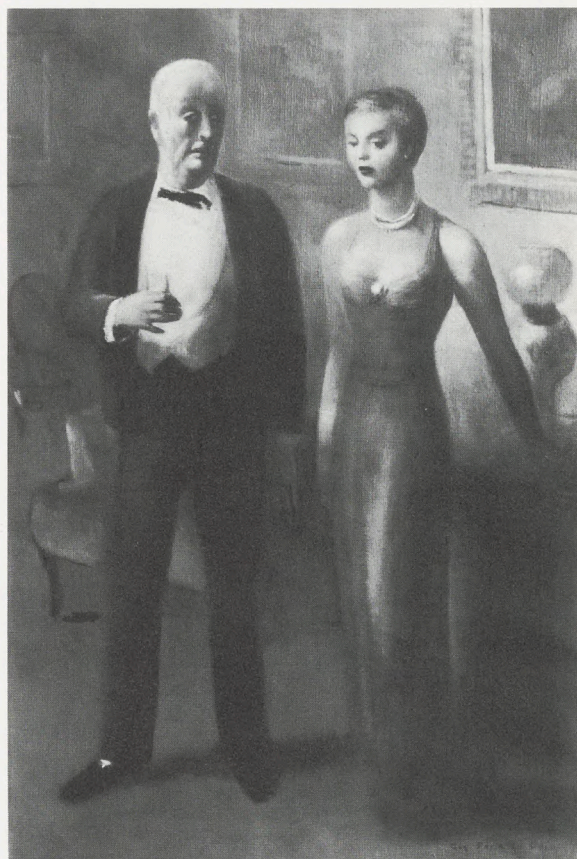
c. 1946

oil on canvas

29 $\frac{7}{8}$ x 20 $\frac{1}{4}$ (75.9 x 51.4)

signed, l.r.: Guy Pène du Bois

Lent by The Pène du Bois Collection



85 ABSINTHE HOUSE, NEW ORLEANS.

1946

oil on canvas

26 x 32 (66.0 x 81.3)

signed, l.r.: Guy Pène du Bois

Lent by The Regis Collection, Inc.



Influences and Contemporaries

With an artist such as Guy Pène du Bois who has been so long overlooked, it is critical to provide a context for his works. In order to do this, works have been included by his teachers (Chase, Henri), fellow students in art school (Hopper, Kent), friends and contemporaries whom he knew and wrote about (Myers, Lawson), significant French parallels (Daumier, Forain), and students (Bishop, Soyer). This juxtaposition enables the viewer not only to appreciate Pène du Bois' style, but also helps us understand his relationship to other artists.

87 HANGOVER.

Peggy Bacon (b. 1895)

1933

etching

4 x 3 (10.1 x 7.6)

Lent by Guild Hall of East Hampton, Gift of

Alexander Brook, 1969



A portrait of Pène du Bois. In her book *Off with Their Heads* (1934), Bacon described him as: "Rich pot-roast effect. Color warm, ruddy, winey. Goopy-fish eyes, skidding off at outer corners. Nose mashed crooked, à fleur de tête. Mustache irregular, personal, in sudden tufts. Deep, vertical creases up and down face and strong horizontal wiggles across forehead, bisected by a few uprights. Tilted lips in a tiny, puckered seam up at left, finished neatly by folds to nose. Sooty chin. Small simple hands. Air of the keen, worldly bon-viveur with a lively leer and a light-hearted twinkle. Relaxed, cosy and comfortable."

88 FORBES WATSON.

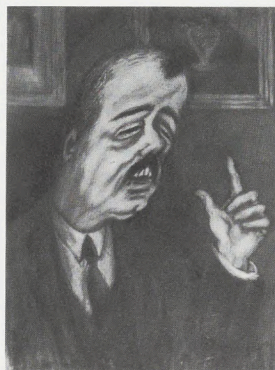
Peggy Bacon (b. 1895)

c. 1931

pastel on canvas

20 $\frac{1}{8}$ x 15 $\frac{1}{8}$ (51.1 x 38.4)

Lent by The St. Louis Art Museum, Gift of Wallace H. Smith 328:1962



Pène du Bois replaced Watson as art critic on the *New York Post* in 1917. Watson, who edited *The Arts* and *Arts Weekly* to which Pène du Bois contributed, was a good friend of Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney.
Shown at Corcoran only.

89 ROYAL CORTISSOZ.

Peggy Bacon (b. 1895)

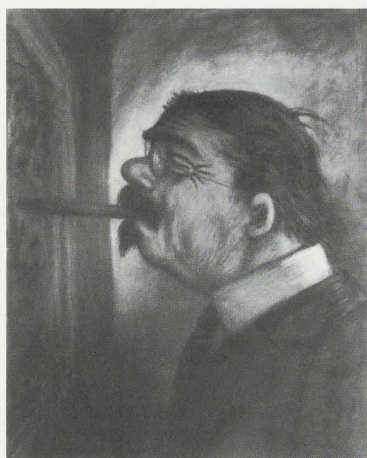
1931

pastel on canvas

20 $\frac{1}{8}$ x 16 $\frac{1}{8}$ (51.0 x 41.0)

signed, l.l.: Peggy Bacon

Lent by The St. Louis Art Museum, Gift of Wallace H. Smith 329:1962



Pène du Bois served as an assistant to Cortissov for about a year between 1913 and 1914 on the *New York Tribune*. Cortissov authored the monograph on Pène du Bois in the Whitney Museum's American Artists Series in 1931. *Shown at Corcoran only.*

90 YVONNE.

Louis Betts (1873-1961)

1921

oil on canvas

24 $\frac{1}{4}$ x 18 $\frac{1}{4}$ (61.6 x 46.3)

signed, u.r.: Louis Betts

Lent by the Corcoran Gallery of Art, Gift of the artist



This is a portrait of the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Guy Pène du Bois. This portrait was supposedly painted after Pène du Bois disparaged Betts' paintings of children.

91 TWO GIRLS OUTDOORS.

Isabel Bishop (b. 1902)

1944

oil on composition board

30 x 18 (76.2 x 45.7)

signed, l.r.: Isabel Bishop

Lent by the Corcoran Gallery of Art, Museum Purchase, Anna E. Clark Fund



Before she became a student of Kenneth Hayes Miller, Bishop studied with Pène du Bois for a short time in 1920.

92 AN ENGLISH COD.

William Merritt Chase (1849-1916)

1904

oil on canvas

36 $\frac{1}{4}$ x 40 $\frac{1}{4}$ (92.1 x 102.2)

Lent by the Corcoran Gallery of Art

Chase was Pène du Bois' first instructor at the New York School of Art in 1899.



93 LES CURIEUX A L'ETALAGE D'ESTAMPES/AT THE PRINT STALL.

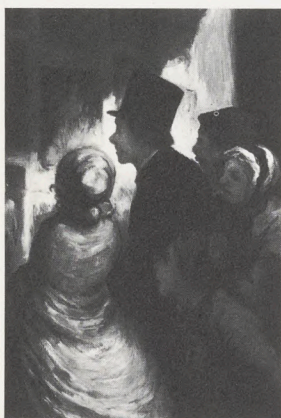
Honoré Daumier (1808-1879)

1852

oil on panel

12 $\frac{3}{4}$ x 9 (32.4 x 22.9)

Lent by the Corcoran Gallery of Art, William A. Clark Collection



Pène du Bois, whom many critics considered a satirist, was frequently compared with Daumier.

94 COURT SCENE, INTERIOR.

Jean Louis Forain (1852-1931)

late 19th/early 20th century

oil on canvas

20 x 24 (50.8 x 61.0)

Lent by the Corcoran Gallery of Art, William A. Clark Collection



Forain, an older French contemporary of Pène du Bois, treated many of the same subjects.

95 LUXEMBOURG GARDENS.

William James Glackens (1870-1938)

1906

oil on canvas

23 $\frac{3}{4}$ x 32 (60.3 x 81.3)

signed l.l.: W Glackens

Lent by the Corcoran Gallery of Art, Museum Purchase,
William A. Clark Fund



Among Pène du Bois' closest friends was William Glackens, whom he regarded as his "favorite among American painters." He authored a volume on Glackens for the Whitney Museum's American Artists Series in 1931.

97 PORTRAIT OF GUY PENE DU BOIS.

Edward Hopper (1882-1967)

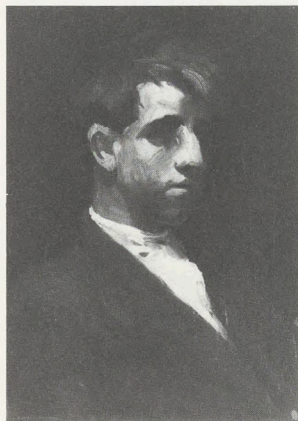
1905

oil on canvas

24 $\frac{3}{8}$ x 17 $\frac{1}{2}$ (61.9 x 44.4)

signed, l.l.: Edward Hopper

Lent by The Pène du Bois Collection



Hopper was a student in Henri's class with Pène du Bois and remained one of his closest friends for the rest of his life. Pène du Bois authored a monograph on Hopper for the Whitney Museum's American Artists Series in 1931.

96 SEATED NUDE.

Robert Henri (1865-1929)

c. 1918

oil on canvas

32 x 26 $\frac{1}{4}$ (81.3 x 66.7)

Lent by the Corcoran Gallery of Art, Gift of A. M. and
Lillian Adler



Henri began teaching at the New York School of Art during the 1902-3 season. He exposed Pène du Bois to a philosophy of "art and life" which remained with him for the remainder of his career. Pène du Bois served as monitor of the class and authored several articles on his former teacher.

98 GROUND SWELL.

Edward Hopper (1882-1967)

1939

oil on canvas

36½ x 50¼ (92.7 x 127.6)

signed, l.r.: Edward Hopper

Lent by the Corcoran Gallery of Art, Museum Purchase,
William A. Clark Fund



99 ADIRONDACKS.

Rockwell Kent (1882-1971)

1928/30

oil on canvas

38½ x 54⅞ (97.8 x 139.4)

signed, l.r.: Rockwell Kent/1928/30

Lent by the Corcoran Gallery of Art, Museum Purchase,
William A. Clark Fund



Kent was a fellow student with Pène du Bois in the Henri class.

100 BOATHOUSE, WINTER, HARLEM RIVER.

Ernest Lawson (1873-1939)

1916

oil on canvas

40½ x 50⅛ (102.8 x 127.3)



signed, l.r.: E. LAWSON

Lent by the Corcoran Gallery of Art

In 1932, Guy Pène du Bois' monograph on Lawson was published by the Whitney Museum of American Art in their American Artist Series.

101 LOOKING AND PRICING.

Kenneth Hayes Miller (1876-1952)

1938

oil on canvas

28¼ x 23¼ (71.7 x 59.0)

signed, u.r.: Hayes Miller/'38

Lent by Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden,
Smithsonian Institution



After studying briefly with Beckwith and Du Mond, Guy Pène du Bois moved into a class taught by Kenneth Hayes Miller.

102 LIFE ON THE EAST SIDE.

Jerome Myers (1867-1940)

1931

oil on canvas

30¼ x 40¼ (76.8 x 102.2)

signed, l.r.: JEROME MYERS/N.Y. 1931

Lent by the Corcoran Gallery of Art



In Jerome Myers, Guy Pène du Bois saw an admirable balance of art and life. Myers remained one of his good friends.

103 WASHINGTON SQUARE.

Yvonne Pène du Bois McKenney (b. 1913)
c. 1949
oil on canvas
20 x 24 (50.8 x 60.9)
Lent by New Britain Museum of American Art
(Harriet Russell Stanley Fund)



Yvonne, the artist's daughter, became a painter in her own right.

105 WAITING ROOM.

Raphael Soyer (b. 1899)
c. 1940
oil on canvas
34 $\frac{1}{4}$ x 45 $\frac{1}{4}$ (87.6 x 114.9)
signed, l.l.: RAPHAEL/SOYER
Lent by the Corcoran Gallery of Art, Museum Purchase,
William A. Clark Fund



Soyer began to study with Guy Pène du Bois in 1920 and continued with him off and on over the course of several years.

104 MISCATIONARY.

John Sloan (1871-1951)
1930
oil on masonite
27 x 24 (68.6 x 61.0)
signed, u.l.: John Sloan
Lent by Kraushaar Galleries



About 1931, Pène du Bois' monograph on Sloan was published by the Whitney Museum of American Art as part of their American Artists Series. Sloan was part of the Henri circle. The title is a playful combination by the artist of miss, cat, and dictionary, all of which appear in the painting.

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